

# AGENDA

## REGULAR MEETING

### OF THE

## STOKES COUNTY

**December 15, 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 – November 17, 2021
- IV. Board Member Comments
- V. Public Comments (Maximum Allowance of Ten Minutes Per Person)
- VI. Discussion
  - A. REDA (October)
  - B. Child Day Care Technical Assistance Report (11/18/21)
  - C. Child Support Consult (11/17/21)
  - D. Social Services Board Operating Procedures
  - E. Social Services Board Meeting Dates for 2022
  - F. DSS Budget
- VII. Action Items
  - A. Old Business
  - B. New Business  
Next meeting -- January 26, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. in the DSS conference room
- VIII. Adjournment

STOKES COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
MINUTES  
November 17, 2021

The regular meeting of the Stokes County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at the Social Services building in Danbury. Chairman Greg Collins called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Board members present were Chairman Collins, Vice-Chair Sandy Smith, Member Darlene Bullins and Member Sonya Cox. Staff present were Director Stacey Elmes, Admin. Officer Becky East, and Income Maintenance Administrator Cindy Joyce.

Chairman Collins shared that Member Ann Vance had resigned and has taken a contract position with the Department. Members will send a 'thank you' letter for her time on the board.

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. Member Bullins motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Vice-Chair Smith seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Chairman Collins asked for approval of the consent agenda. Member Cox motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Member Bullins seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

**Board Member Comments:**

Member Cox stated she learned a lot from the DSS Board training.

Vice-Chair Smith stated she learned a lot and was very appreciative of the training.

Member Bullins stated it was a good refresher course for her.

Chairman Collins stated the training was a good course and that he learned a lot.

There were no public comments.

Director Elmes shared that the DSS Dashboard had nothing out of the ordinary to mention but did want to bring up, like last month that Medicaid and Food and Nutrition case numbers continue to increase. This will be looked at during budget season for the possibility of requesting new positions to ensure there are enough employees to handle the workload.

Other items on the agenda for discussion were the following:

**REDA (Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit - September 2021)**

Income Maintenance Administrator Joyce informed the Board that the agency had one error, an eligibility error – household composition, which brought the agency's score to 90%. The agency's goal is 96% so one error case causes the agency to not meet the goal. The supervisor has been pre-testing and post-testing employees to see if there was a problem with an individual employee or if the unit as a whole had issues. The supervisor provided extra training to prevent this error from happening again. This month, October reviews are at 100% so far.

### **Child Support Conference Call**

Director Elmes shared that this is the monthly review with the child support representative. Director Elmes stated the agency is not on track as of right now, but will be by the end of the year per representative. Member Bullins confirmed with Director Elmes that interstate cases involve parents who live out of state.

### **Staff Compliments**

Director Elmes shared that the agency received a note from a client thanking Patty Fulp, Income Maintenance Caseworker in Adult Medicaid, for her help.

### **Old Business**

No information.

### **New Business**

Director Elmes shared that she will be having shoulder surgery on December 2, 2021 and would most likely be attending the next board meeting virtually.

Chairman Collins spoke about the policy on virtual meetings sharing that the Board should look at the Operating Procedures to ensure it is addressed appropriately giving consideration to the pandemic and vacations or illness. This matter will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Member Cox requested the following information:

\*Percentages of funding the agency receives from state, federal, and county sources

\*What programs, if any, were all county funded

Director Elmes responded that the percentages change during the year due to funding, but would provide as close as possible percentages and would also provide a chart showing the agency's mandated programs along with all county funded programs.

Member Bullins confirmed with Director Elmes that the agency still has the Local General Assistance Program in the budget. Director Elmes shared these are all county dollars and these funds are used to pay for cremations of unclaimed bodies. Chairman Collins shared that the agency's employees have been really good about trying to find family members to claim the body.

Member Cox confirmed with Director Elmes that the agency currently only has one vacancy, Adult Services Social Worker II, which has been vacant for approximately four months with no applications. The agency currently has six adult service workers that carry caseloads and provide intake. With LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) starting December 1<sup>st</sup>, Adult Services will be very busy.

Vice-Chairman Smith requested some good points that Board members could use while being a positive advocate for DSS. Director Elmes responded that could be provided.

Chairman Collins requested that Director Elmes tell the staff the Board wishes them a Happy Thanksgiving.

Director Elmes noted the following upcoming agency events that the Board is invited to attend:

\*November 19, 2021 – agency will have breakfast for employees (8:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.)

\*December 10, 2021 – Sharon Bullins’ retirement reception (2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

\*December 17, 2021 - office will be closing at 12:00 noon to allow employees to have lunch and participate in team building exercises (Arts Council)

Next DSS Board meeting will be December 15, 2021 at 3 p.m.

There being no further business, Chairman Collins asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Cox made a motion to adjourn. Member Bullins seconded and the motion passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

Stacy Elmes  
Secretary

11/29/2021  
Date

**DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION  
SUBSIDY SERVICES SECTION  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE VISIT REPORT**

**LPA:** Stokes County Department of Social Services  
**DATE OF CONTACT:** November 18, 2021 – Microsoft Teams Meeting  
**LPA STAFF:** Cindy Joyce and Sharon Bullins  
**SERVICES CONSULTANT:** Belinda Thomas

**FUNDING MANAGEMENT**

***Direct Services***

**Non-Smart Start**

- Non-Smart Start allocation for direct services is \$1,140,259.
- The Non-Smart Start expenditure for the September 2021 service month was \$59,910.
- The Non-Smart Start spending target for the October 2021 service month was \$108,511.
- The current Non-Smart Start spending coefficient is 66%.
- An allocation adjustment was issued effective November 1, 2021. The agency received \$210,302 additional funds and \$28,501 in IV-E funds. Stokes County received \$238,803.

**Smart Start**

- Smart Start allocation for direct services is \$251,772.
- The Smart Start expenditure for the September 2021 service month was \$12,930.
- The Smart Start spending target for the October 2021 service month was \$24,004.
- The current Smart Start spending coefficient is 65%.

**Combined**

- The combined allocation for direct services is \$1,392,031.
- The combined expenditure for the September 2021 service month was \$72,840.
- The combined spending target for the October 2021 service month was \$132,515.
- The current Combined spending coefficient is 66%.

***Services Support***

**Non-Smart Start**

- Direct Services Support allocation is \$80,000.
- The Direct Services Support expenditure is \$26,238.
- Balance of \$53,762 is anticipated to be spent in full by the end of the fiscal year.

**Smart Start**

- Direct Services Support allocation is \$0.
- The services support expenditure is \$0.
- The agency does not receive Smart Start services support funds.

***Vulnerable Population Set-Aside***

- County Vulnerable Population Set Aside amount is not available at this time.
- County has spent \$(not available) of their Vulnerable Population Set Aside funds.

### **WAITING LIST**

Number of Children on the Waiting List: 0

### **ACTION NEEDED**

- In NC FAST, funds are ranked as Special Needs #1, Non-Smart Start #2 and Smart Start #3. I agree with the ranking of funds.
- Continue to make Obligation Transfers as needed to ensure that Smart Start funding is spent throughout the year. Staff should also make sure there are enough funds to pay Smart Start enhancements through the end of the fiscal year.
- The preliminary expenditures were provided for October services paid in November. The combined spending coefficient is 69%.

### **SMART START COLLABORATION**

Both agencies collaborate well and are very supportive of one another. The agency has a signed Smart Start Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for state fiscal year 2021-22 and Cindy provided a copy to the TA Consultant, Belinda Thomas.

### **WAITING LIST LOCAL POLICIES**

Approved by:

- DCDEE – May 28, 2020
- DSS Board – March 25, 2020

### **RECORD REVIEW**

No records were reviewed for this quarter.

### ***Finding(s)***

N/A

### ***Corrective Action(s)***

N/A

### **COMPLIANCE SCORING**

N/A

### **POLICY DISCUSSION**

#### ***Review of Policies***

- A recertification must be processed by the worker within 30 calendar days from the date the recertification packet was received in the agency (the job aid is incorrect as it states 30-days from the date the packet is signed). Currently, the system considers changes keyed from a recertification as a change of circumstance. The system is counting the 20-days (10-days to report and 10-days for the worker to respond) and generating over or underpayments if the change is processed after 20-days. If a worker does not process the recertification within 20 days, but the worker processes the recertification timely within the 30-day timeframe, the system will still generate an over or underpayment. DCDEE management is aware of this issue and it was decided that counties can add those

over/underpayments to their invalid list to be closed until the issue is corrected in the system.

- Staff must send voter registration materials and document the information in the case notes for every application, recertification, and change of address. If the client states he/she does not want to register to vote, staff should still send the voter registration materials. Staff should also document the date the voter registration materials were mailed to the client.
- As a reminder, staff should deem income from Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) if the client works at the same job and income is representative. If the worker is unable to deem income from FNS, obtain base period check stubs. If base period check stubs are provided in addition to other check stubs, use the correct base period check stubs. Staff can shred check stubs that were not used in the budget.
- The SCCA program will continue to allow county staff and LPA staff to mail out applications after the COVID19 pandemic ends. If a county is paying for childcare to support children in foster care, and the foster care case closes, the county will need to close the child only SCCA case. The parent/responsible adult (RA) will need to apply in his/her name and the county can mail the application even if the parent/RA lives in another county. The county will process the application timely and when the signed voucher is received and all paperwork is completed, the county can transfer the case to the county where the parent/RA resides.
- If a worker receives a recertification packet during the grace period, and the client reports a change that occurred during the grace period, process the recertification based on the family situation as it was by the due date of the recertification (household composition, income, etc.) and then after the recert is processed react to the reported/known change as a change in circumstance(s).

#### **NC FAST ISSUE(S)**

- A communication was issued September 7, 2021. County workers should be advised that providers are no longer required to select "Add Shift count" while submitting attendance in the NC FAST Provider Portal to complete the attendance. 'Add Shift Count' is now optional. The System will automatically submit the rolled-up roster after the last child on the roster is submitted by the provider.
- If a childcare provider receives a manual or an advance payment from DCDEE, the information will now be entered in NC FAST. DCDEE staff will enter notes under the provider 'Contact' tab and in the 'Notes' folder. If a provider contacts a county worker to ask why funds were removed from their full payment, the worker can go to the notes page to see if there was an advance payment made. A deduction is entered because NC FAST will pay the provider again and therefore DCDEE must add a deduction to the payment. Also, if a provider states they were not paid for a certain child for a particular month, county staff can review the notes section to see if a manual or advance payment was made for the child.
- A communication was issued on October 15, 2021. The NC FAST team determined the system had generated over 30,000 invalid \$1 Food Subsidy over payments following the June 2021 release. This issue has been resolved and the clean-up activity has been completed. All invalid overpayments that have a matching underpayment have now been closed. No action was needed from the counties.

- NC FAST sent a communication on October 25, 2021. NC FAST is aware that workers are receiving an unhandled server error message when authorizing an application without a plan of care. An error message is also received when adding a plan of care without a provider and no eligibility check has been run after the changes have been applied. Workers must ensure a plan of care is present for the application to be authorized. If a client has not selected a provider, a plan of care can still be added but an eligibility check must be run after the evidence has been applied.

### **PROVIDER ISSUE(S)**

If a provider calls the worker regarding an issue with a payment, always check the plan of care, approved rate, and the roster to determine if the payment was made correctly. Also, some providers are reporting the parent fees were not paid during a month the parent fees were waived. If the manual fee adjustment was not completed by the worker and it should have been, the worker can complete the fee adjustment and activate the underpayment for the parent fee amount to be paid. There would be no reason for the provider to call the help desk in that situation.

### **OTHER DISCUSSION**

- As a reminder, the temporary grace period for recertifications was extended through December 31, 2021.
- DCDEE issued a Dear County Director Letter (DCDL #2021-12) on October 13, 2021. Parental fees will be waived through January 2022. Notices were sent to parents and providers.
- DCDEE continues to pay the differential payments for blended rate eligible children from 83% to 100%. DCDEE also continues to pay the difference between the 83% parent fee and 100% parent fee. The 17% differential payments are paid to providers each month in a separate payment run.

### **FOLLOW-UP TASKS FOR LPA STAFF BEFORE NEXT VISIT**

N/A

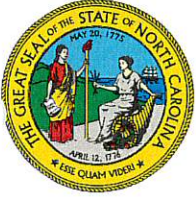
### **FOLLOW-UP TASKS FOR SERVICES CONSULTANT BEFORE NEXT VISIT**

N/A

### **TENTATIVE DATE OF NEXT VISIT**

February 22, 2022





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 November 17, 2021, Lynn, Cynthia, 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 October 2021. The Total Collections goal benchmark for October is 33.33%. The unit is just below State Average for Total Collections (31.75%) at 30.18%. The unit has been able to achieve/exceed the 2021-22 goal for Cases Under Order (89.00%) at 92.30%, and Current Collection (66.25%) at 67.07%. The unit is ON track in the area of Arrears Collection (62.48%) at 49.06%. The unit is OFF Track in the areas of Paternity (96.83%) at 92.14%. In the area of Paternity, last year at this time the unit was at 93.54%. I will continue to suggest reports that may increase incentive areas. Reports suggested/provided: Paternity reports, and Undistributed Report.

Goals 2020-21					
TC	Paternity	CUO	CC	Arrears	Medical
\$2,461,257.58	96.83	89	66.72	62.48	
Current	10/21				
30.18<	92.14>	92.30>*	67.07>*	49.06<	86.15>

\*-Exceeding/achieving goal

Self-Assessment scores are available through October 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 72.41%. Compliance in this area is 75%. All other areas have a compliance level of 75% or better. Reports suggested/provided during this call: P/F for Enforcement and Interstate.

Effective October 1, 2021, changes were made as to how monies that are collected for the Arrears Collections incentive area are counted for the Child Support program. On the OCSE 157 report; lines Line 25 and Line 27 currently provide the distributed collections; the change being implemented will provide the disbursed collections.

Line 29 currently does not count former assistance cases that do not have a payment being made to the family. The changes are as follows:

- a. If all the arrears are due to the family – and payment is made to the family – count it on Line 29.
- b. If all the arrears are due to the State – and payment is made to the State – count it on Line 29.
- c. If some of the arrears are due to the family and some of the arrears are due to the State – and payment is made to the family – count it on Line 29.
- d. If some of the arrears are due to the family and some of the arrears are due to the State – and payment is made to the State – DO NOT count it on Line 29.

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.

<b>Number of Cases Reviewed</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Monthly Quality Review Score</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Date to Correct Case(s)</b>
3	November	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](mailto: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

**STOKES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD**  
**OPERATING PROCEDURES**

**Mission Statement**

Stokes County DSS strives to provide preventative and supportive services with competence and compassion. We are committed to protect our most vulnerable citizens from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Our services reach all areas of our county and we strive to assist families in obtaining knowledge, skills, and the support needed to remain or become strong, healthy, and self reliant.

**1. Name and Office**

The name of this organization is the Stokes County Department of Social Services Board (hereinafter "Board"). The principal office of the Board is located at 1010 Main Street, Danbury, NC 27016.

**2. Officers and Committees**

**a. Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Board members shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair by majority vote each year at the July meeting.

**b. Secretary**

The Social Services Director shall serve as Secretary to the Board, but the Director is not a member of the Board. The Social Services Director may delegate the duties of the Secretary that are set forth in these operating procedures to an appropriate Social Services employee.

**c. Standing Committees**

The Board shall not have standing committees.

**d. Temporary Committees**

The Board may establish and appoint members for temporary committees as needed to carry out the Board's work. All temporary committees are subject to the North Carolina open meetings laws and shall comply with the provisions of those laws. Laws regarding open meeting laws are available in the DSS Resource manual\*.

**3. Meetings**

**a. Regular meetings**

The Board shall hold a regular meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The meeting shall be held at the Stokes County Department of Social Services and shall begin at 3:00 p.m. In the event of an emergency circumstances such as, but not limited to, natural disaster or public health crisis: at the discretion of the chair, the DSS Board may meet by telephone conference or other electronic means (examples: Skype, Go-

to-Meeting, or Zoom). Notification of these meetings will be made to all appropriate parties in accordance to the Open Meetings Laws.

**b. Attendance**

Board members are expected to attend all regular Board meetings. If a Board member misses three consecutive meetings and/or attends less than 70 percent of the regularly scheduled meetings during a calendar year, the Board may request that the County Commissioners remove this member in accordance with General Statute 135A-35 (g)(4) "habitual failure to attend meetings." Absences due to illness, family emergencies, and business conflicts shall be regarded as excused, and shall not affect Board Members' status, providing prior notice is given to the Secretary and/or the designee.

**c. Agenda**

- The Secretary to the Board shall prepare an agenda for each meeting. Any board member who wishes to place an item of business on the agenda shall submit a request to the Secretary at least ten working days before the meeting to provide the Secretary ample time for agenda delivery. For regular meetings, the Board may add items to the agenda or subtract items from the agenda by a majority vote. The agenda for a special or emergency meeting may be altered only if permitted by and in accordance with the North Carolina open meetings law.\*

**d. Presiding Officer**

The Chair of the Board shall preside at the Board meeting. If the Chair is absent, the Vice-Chair shall preside. If the Chair and Vice-Chair are both absent, the Secretary shall preside unless another Board member chooses to do so.

**e. Quorum**

A majority of the actual membership of the Board, excluding vacant seats, shall constitute a quorum. A member who has withdrawn from a meeting without being excused by a majority vote of the remaining members shall be counted as present for purposes of determining whether or not a quorum is present.

**f. Voting**

Each Board member shall be permitted to abstain from voting, by so indicating when the vote is taken. A member must abstain from voting in cases involving conflicts of interest as defined by North Carolina law\*. If a member has withdrawn from a meeting without being excused by a majority vote of the remaining members, the member's vote shall be recorded as an abstention. If a member abstains from voting it will be counted as affirmative.

**g. Public Comments**

- Any person may address the Board but may only discuss one topic at a time.
- The address must be limited to five minutes or up to ten minutes if there are no other speakers from the floor. A time extension is at the discretion of the Chair. Discussion of a single topic will be limited to fifteen minutes regardless of the number of individuals who wish to speak (groups are encouraged to select a spokesperson).
- Each speaker must give their names and address at the beginning of the address.

- A speaker may address any issue relevant to the Department of Social Services but must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the proceedings and appropriate for the occasion.
- Board members will not respond to public comments.
- The Chair may modify these rules and may adjourn or recess this portion of the meeting at any time.

**h. Minutes**

The Secretary shall prepare minutes of each Board meeting. Copies of the minutes shall be made available at least five days before the next regular Board meeting. At each regular meeting, the Board shall review the minutes of the previous regular meeting as well as any special or emergency meetings that have occurred since the previous regular meeting, make any necessary revisions, and approve the minutes as originally drafted or as revised. The public may obtain copies of Board meeting minutes at the Stokes County Department of Social Services.

**i. Training**

New board members will receive reference materials ,i.e. handbook and resource manual regarding authorities and responsibilities of the Board of Social Services board within the first month of appointment to the board. In addition to initial training received in the first year, each board member shall receive ongoing training and/or reference materials to the authorities and responsibilities of a Social Services board at least annually.

**4. Amendments to Operating Procedures**

These operating procedures may be amended at any regular meeting or at any properly called special meeting that includes amendment of the operating procedures as one of the stated purposes of the meeting. A quorum must be present at which amendments are discussed and approved, and any amendments must be approved by a majority of the members present at the meeting.

**5. Other Procedural Matters**

The Board shall refer to the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) to answer procedural questions not addressed in this document, so long as the procedures prescribed in RONR do not conflict with North Carolina law. A copy of Robert's Rules of Order will be provided by the Director.

**6. Compliance with North Carolina Law**

In conducting its business, the Board shall comply with all applicable North Carolina laws, including but not limited to open meetings laws, public records laws, and the laws setting forth the powers and duties of local boards of social services. To assist the Board in compliance, the Social Services Director shall maintain a current copy of relevant North Carolina General Statutes and make them available to Board members upon request.

**\* Refer to Resource Manual**

Approved and adopted by the Stokes County Department of Social Services Board on

March 25, 2020

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair, Stokes County Department of Social Services Board

\_\_\_\_\_

Director, Stokes County Department of Social Services



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

Post Office Box 30  
Danbury, North Carolina 27016

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

Stacey S. Elmes  
Director

(336)593-2861 • Fax (336)593-9362 • Courier # 09-16-01

Unless otherwise advertised, the Stokes County Board of Social Services will meet at 3:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Department of Social Services in Danbury on the following dates in 2022:

- January 26, 2022
- February 23, 2022
- March 23, 2022
- April 27, 2022
- May 25, 2022
- June 22, 2022
- July 27, 2022
- August 24, 2022
- September 28, 2022
- October 26, 2022
- November 16, 2022
- December 14, 2022

Approved by the DSS Board on \_\_\_\_\_