



Hurricane Helene Updates for Local Departments of Social Services

October 24, 2024

Child Welfare and Adult Updates

- **County Assessment and ACF Reporting**
- **Adult Services**
- **Secondary Traumatic Stress Learning Communities**
- **Foster Home Licensing Flexibilities and Changes**
- **Child Welfare Training Modifications**
- **Flexibilities for SA In Home**

Safety Checks

- **Conducted for all children in foster care and vulnerable adults in original 27 impacted counties**
- **Survey was completed with the other 73 counties to confirm children in their custody placed in the disaster impacted counties**
- **All were accounted for and safe**



Children's Bureau Disaster Reporting Requirements

- **Safety of children and youth**
- **Disruption of the CPS system and any increase in reporting**
- **Reports of unaccompanied children**
- **Safety of youth in expanded foster care 18-21**
- **Are there supports for families receiving CPS?**
- **Have Chafee Foster Care Independence Program providers been affected?**
- **Other disruption of services including private agencies providing federally funded family supports, and LINKS services**
- **Interstate challenges**
- **Status of foster families and group homes dislocated**
- **Potential damage to records**

Adult Services Updates

- **County Survey and Assessments for:**
 - APS
 - Guardianship
 - SAIH
- **Thank you for ensuring this vulnerable population is safe!**

Customer Assistance Line

NC DSS recognized the need to provide access to an escalation line for group home providers, Foster Family Alliance and Child Welfare Directors' questions and requests for assistance.

The access line began on 10-4-24

The number is 919-527-6340

We have received calls for assistance for two families for help with housing and medications which have been provided.

CHILD WELFARE – SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) Learning Communities are designed to normalize addressing STS and share successful strategies used across North Carolina Child Welfare workers.

- The 60- minute Sessions provide additional support and resources for those who are impacted by Hurricane Helene or who are providing support to others impacted by the storms**
- They are offered monthly, primarily for child welfare supervisors and their frontline staff, and purposely facilitated by experts from the Duke University Center for Child and Family Health.**
- The calls have been organized by position and region, with one call each for front-line workers and supervisors in the Eastern, Central, and Western parts of North Carolina.**
- Registration for sessions can be found in the DCDL @ <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/cws752024/download?attachment>**

Foster Home Licensing Flexibilities and Updates

- **Waivers are in place to provide continuity of foster home licensing**
- **This information is in a DCDL (CWS-78-2024) was released on October 17, 2024**
- **Two webinars scheduled to walk through the flexibilities:**
 - October 24, 2024: 10:00am-11:00am
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7067448980229577814>
 - October 25, 2024: 1:00pm-2:00pm
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2621586907456866137>
- **Please note the Black Mountain Office is closed so do not mail any licensing actions to the Black Mountain office**

Child Welfare Training Accommodations

- **Asheville PST in progress resumed 10/21 with Core Week 2. Was to end on 11/1; Will now end 11/22**
- **Charlotte PST moved due to FEMA efforts**
- **Asheville PST in November has been relocated to Hickory**

Piloting of Hybrid Pre-Service Training

- **Cameras must be on during virtual sessions**
- **Supervisory support during virtual sessions**
- **Ongoing evaluation of knowledge gain will continue**

Special Assistance Updates

Special Assistance

Hurricane Helene updates:

DCDL was issued on 10/17/24:

SUBJECT: To waive or modify enforcement of requirements related to the Special Assistance program, including without limitation 10A N.C. Admin. Code 71P .0601 and .0701 for the following affected counties:

Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey counties or be a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

In light of the devastating impact of Hurricane Herlene and pursuant to Executive Order 319 (<https://governor.nc.gov/executive-order-no-319/open>) the following waivers to NC Administrative codes 71P .0601 and .0701 have been granted:

10A N.C. Admin. Code 71P .0601 states in part, “That an applicant can apply for benefits on the same day they appear at a County Department.”

Pursuant to Executive Order 319, the requirement for a face-to-face interview for Special assistance has been waived until further notification.

10A N.C. Admin. Code 71P .0701 states in part that, “All eligibility factors as set forth in Rules .0804 and .0805 of this Subchapter that are subject to change shall be reviewed at least once every 12 months, before the recipient receives the 13th State/County Special Assistance Program payment.”

Pursuant to Executive Order 319, counties have the option to extend Special Assistance certification periods up to three months. During the certification extension period, existing FL-2’s will be honored.

A follow up DCDL has been drafted to clarify the SA/SAIH application date determination and the pending auto-extension of certification dates by NCFast



Special Assistance

Hurricane Helene updates:



- **Change Request (CR) will be sent to NCFast to automatically extend SA/SAIH certification periods pursuant to Executive Order 319.**
- **Certification periods that were scheduled to expire Oct 31, 2024, will have the certification period auto extended in NCFAST by 3 months, so that the certification ends on January 31, 2025**
- **Certification periods that were scheduled to expire Nov 30, 2024, will have the certification period auto extended in NCFAST by 3 months, so that the certification ends on February 28, 2025**
- **Certification periods that were scheduled to expire Dec 31, 2024, will have the certification period auto extended in NCFAST by 3 months, so that the certification ends on March 31, 2025**
- **The current 365-day expiration requirement for FL-2s should be turned off effective immediately for affected counties. This expiration requirement should remain off through March 31, 2025.**

DSNAP Updates

Fiscal Updates

Day Sheet coding - DSNAP

903 – FS is the only code used for DSNAP. Counties should use this for all DSNAP activities, including assisting other counties, and staffing the state call center.

Admin and supervisors are not required to keep Day Sheets—their time will be cost allocated. If counties choose to have them code to DSNAP, they must keep a Day Sheet for the entire month.

DSNAP is reimbursed at 50% Federal, 50% County unless the legislature provides additional funding.

DSNAP Reimbursement – Non-Personnel Costs

Fiscal manual policy remains in place during disasters. This includes restrictions on direct charging to programs.

If a county intends to use supplies or equipment across DSS, those charges must be coded to Part II codes **310 or **804**, and cost allocated across the agency.**

Purchases used *only* for DSNAP may be charged to Part II code **411.**

Website – Repository

- **Links to resources, DCDDLs, guidances, and other information related to Hurricane Helene will be posted to this site:**

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/county-staff-information/hurricane-helene-information-local-social-services-agencies>