



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN G. OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for Human Services

November 8, 2022

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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

**SUBJECT: NORTH CAROLINA CHILD WELFARE PRE-SERVICE TRAINING**

**REQUIRED ACTION: X Information Only  Time Sensitive  Immediate**

**PURPOSE:**

The North Carolina Division of Social Services has spent the last year redesigning the North Carolina Child Welfare Pre-Service Training for new workers. This work has been supported by a contract with Public Knowledge which allowed us to review and draw upon training in other states that successfully prepares the workforce. We are very excited to announce that we are nearing the end of the curriculum redesign and are preparing for the training pilot.

**Background**

The field of child welfare is as challenging as it is rewarding. New workers committing to this field come from varying backgrounds, levels of relevant education, and different skill sets to apply to their position. NCDSS recognizes that in order to develop and sustain a confident, consistent workforce, we must:

- Provide new social workers with a training experience that encompasses the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and real-time practice needed to engage families and improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.
- Provide training and support that encourages worker retention during a time of high turnover.
- Align with North Carolina's newly revised Practice Model that includes the Practice Standards, revisions to the Structured Decision-Making Tools, and Safety Organized Practice.
- Maximize resources at the county, regional, and state levels while providing clarity on roles and responsibilities for providing instruction, feedback, and guidance to new workers.

**Implementation Timeline**

The pre-service training implementation will take place in phases beginning in January 2023 and continuing through January 2024. See the [attached figure](#) that outlines the implementation timeline.

- Phase 1: Training of Trainers will occur in January and February 2023.
- Phase 2: Pilot training cohorts will begin in late February 2023. There will be 3 pilot cohorts between February 2023 and September 2023.

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

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Phase 3: Evaluation feedback will be gathered from each cohort, and revisions to the training made dependent upon the feedback received. The final training revisions will be completed in December 2023.

- Phase 4: Statewide implementation of pre-service will begin in January 2024.

### **Pilot Training**

Implementation of the redesigned pre-service training will first begin in one pilot region prior to expansion to statewide implementation. Implementing the training first in a pilot region, will allow NCDHHS to collect data and complete an evaluation of the training to identify any modifications, conditions, and supports that are necessary for statewide implementation. The pilot will provide an important opportunity to work through challenging issues that may arise, and lessons learned and will provide data representing actual worker and supervisor experiences that will help to inform statewide scaling.

We are very pleased to provide the opportunity to participate in the pre-service training pilot to Region 6. Region 6 was selected as the pilot region for many reasons, including:

- Region 6 includes a mix of county sizes: small, medium, and large. Three pilot cohorts can be implemented in Cumberland, Onslow, and Duplin Counties.
- There is an established regional training center located in Region 6, which is unique to this region. The training center is equipped with training equipment, office space, and parking.
- Additionally, both Onslow and Duplin Counties have training space available, and Onslow County has county-approved pre-service trainers on staff that would be provided the opportunity to participate in the training pilot.

Pilot cohorts for the pre-service training will begin in February 2023 and will continue through September 2023. Additional communication will be provided to Region 6 in preparation for the pilot.

### **Statewide Implementation**

Statewide implementation of pre-service is set to begin in January 2024 and will occur in a phased approach. Using a phased approach to statewide implementation will ensure there is always pre-service training availability.

We look forward to implementing the training pilot and receiving feedback on the training revisions in preparation for implementing the redesigned training curriculum statewide. Should you have any questions, please reach out to Tammy Shook, Interim Deputy Director for Child Welfare Operations, at

[Tammy.Shook@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Tammy.Shook@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,



Tammy Shook  
Interim Deputy Director for County Operations/ Regulatory &  
Licensing

Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for Human Services  
Lisa T. Cauley, Senior Director for Child, Family and Adult Services  
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services  
Kimaree Sanders, Interim Section Chief for Regulatory & Licensing  
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Permanency Planning  
Peter L. West, Section Chief of County Operations

Attachment: North Carolina Child Welfare Pre-Service Training

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