



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor

**KODY KINSLEY** • Secretary

**JOYCE MASSEY-SMITH, MPA**  
Director, Division of Aging and Adult Services

November 7, 2023

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: SPECIAL ASSISTANCE SUPERVISORS AND PROGRAM MANAGERS**

**SUBJECT: Special Assistance (SA) and Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH) Rate Adjustments for 2024, and Upcoming Pre-COLA Reports in NC FAST**

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

As per North Carolina Session Law 2022-74 and effective each January 1<sup>st</sup>, Special Assistance rates shall be adjusted using the federally approved Social Security cost-of-living change (if any) effective for the applicable year. **The federally approved Social Security cost-of-living (COLA) adjustment effective for 2024 is 3.2%**. As a result, the following Special Assistance rate changes will occur:

- effective January 1, 2024, the monthly Basic Rate for Special Assistance shall be \$1,326.00, and the Basic Maintenance Amount shall be \$1,396.00
- effective January 1, 2024, the monthly Enhanced Rate for Special Assistance shall be \$1,700.00, and the Enhanced Maintenance Amount shall be \$1,770.00

Special Assistance policy will be updated in the near future to indicate these changes and a related Change Notice will be issued at a later date, prior to implementation of the rate changes.

**Reminder:** Both SA and SAIH COLAs will take place at the same time. Please stay apprised of all updates provided by NC FAST regarding COLA processing.

**SOCIAL SECURITY AND VETERANS' CHANGES DUE TO COLA ADJUSTMENT**

1. RSDI/SSI - Effective January 1, 2024, recipients of RSDI and/or SSI will receive a 3.2% COLA increase in their monthly benefits.
2. SSI Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) - Effective January 1, 2024, the SSI FBR for an individual will increase to \$943.00 per month.
3. VA Compensation and Benefits - Effective January 1, 2024, most recipients of VA compensation and benefits will receive a 3.2% COLA increase in their monthly benefit.

**NC FAST PRE-COLA REPORTS**

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES**

LOCATION: 693 Palmer Drive, Taylor Hall, Raleigh, NC 27603  
MAILING ADDRESS: 2101 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2101  
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-855-3400 • FAX: 919-733-0443

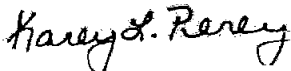
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

In the immediate future, NC FAST will provide notification regarding the posting of **Pre-COLA reports** (On Hold and Pending Evidence In Edit). It is imperative that county staff follow all related guidance and instructions timely and accurately regarding these reports. Successful and complete attention to these Pre-COLA reports allows NC FAST to auto update more case records via COLA batch, *thus reducing the number of cases that Special Assistance staff must review and manually work in December.*

**Helpful note:** cases left “on hold” or with pending evidence(s) **after the date the reports are run** will not be auto updated when the NC FAST COLA batch runs on the first weekend in December. As a result, Special Assistance staff must be mindful not to leave cases in that status (when possible) or they will have to manually review and accept the decisions on those cases as part of December COLA.

NC FAST will provide notification, further guidance, and all reports related to COLA automation. All communication guidance and instructions must be followed timely and accurately to ensure appropriate actions are taken to avoid extra caseworker attention and potential overpayments. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the Special Assistance listserv at [specialassistance@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:specialassistance@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,



Karey Perez

Adult Service Section Chief  
Division of Aging and Adult Services

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