



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services

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Wayne E. Black
Division Director

January 2, 2014

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

SUBJECT: CHILD WELFARE DATA COLLECTION

This letter is to provide final written information regarding updates and deadlines for the submission of county agency staffing data needed to meet state and federal reporting mandates as well as to respond to public inquiries received by the Department of Health and Human Services. The two elements of the data, the Annual Child Welfare Staffing Survey (online completion) and the Monthly Child Welfare Data Workbooks (MS Excel) for calendar year 2013, are due to the Division by January 31, 2014.

Background

The long standing Child Welfare Staffing Survey was created out of concern for child welfare caseloads in county department of social services and the workforce available to manage them. Since the survey data are public information, accurate and consistent data is critical to describe each county's capacity to achieve safety, permanence, and well-being for children.

In 2012, a work group primarily composed of staff from county departments was convened to assure that only essential data was requested along with the means by which it is collected. The result of the effort was to divide the data collection between an annual survey and a monthly data workbook submitted quarterly to the Division.

Annual Child Welfare Staffing Survey

The Annual Child Welfare Staffing survey, as in previous years, will be completed on line. The data collected in the Annual Survey are those best captured at the end of the year rather than during the year.

The categories covered in the 17 questions include:

1. After hours CPS coverage
2. CPS Full Time Equivalents (FTE's)
3. Malicious Reports
4. Legal Representation
5. Child Welfare Staff Vacancies
6. Child Welfare Staff Hiring and Training
7. Education Levels of Child Welfare staff

Child Welfare Services

www.ncdhhs.gov • www.ncdhhs.gov/dss

Tel 919-527-6335 • Fax 919-334-1018

Location: McBryde Bldg. • 820 S. Boylan Street • Raleigh, NC 27603

Mailing Address: 2401 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

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A list of the questions is attached which should be completed **prior to completing the online survey**. Once the survey is started, it must be completed. When all the questions are answered, enter the information into the online survey at: <https://www.ncsurveymax.com/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=I432lp6>.

Monthly Data Workbook

A format for collecting caseload and staffing data on a monthly basis was developed by the workgroup last year. We are passing along a special thank you to the 59 counties that have worked with the Division to design a tool that projects the workloads and volumes that counties face regularly through their data submissions. The submission of the data for the year is critical to provide the full picture on the state of child welfare staffing to members of the General Assembly, the media, Federal agencies, and researchers who are seeking this data. When this information is requested and provided, the division must add the caveat when explaining missing county data. Your agency's participation in the staffing instruments is greatly appreciated.

The Division will be conducting several webinars on completing the workbook and answer any specific questions for county staff completing the workbook.

The sessions will be held on:

- January 13, 2014 at 10 a.m.
- January 16, 2014 at 10 a.m.
- January 21, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.
- January 27, 2014 at 10 a.m.

All four session can be access via the webinar link <https://dss.ncgovconnect.com/r86035566/> and the call in number will be 267-507-0400 access code 994881#.

The webinars will highlight how to record the data and assure its accuracy. The lessons learned from the data submissions during the year should provide a base for accurate recording of staffing information. The goal is to present the most precise information as possible to decision makers and researchers. After the webinars, if additional assistance is needed, individual technical assistance sessions can be provided.

Two previous Dear County Director Letters provide background information regarding the data collection: CWS-02-2013 <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/dcdl/famsupchildwelfare/CWS-02-13.pdf> and CWS-04-2013 <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/dcdl/famsupchildwelfare/cws-04-13.pdf>

Please submit the completed 2013 Workbooks to the point of contact Children's Program Representative (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/team/CPRList.html>) along with a copy of the agency's organizational chart. The Children's Program Representatives are available to assist with any questions and will be in touch with staff of counties from whom submissions are not received.

Monthly Data Workbooks in 2014

The original work group reviewed an upgrade of the workbook that will be used in calendar year 2014. The upgrade will contain the same basic information but be more user friendly. This information will be provided in a future letter.

Thank you for your assistance with this important endeavor. If you have questions, please contact one of the Children's Program Representatives or Jeff Olson at (919) 334-1137 or jeffrey.olson@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Kevin Kelley, Section Chief
Child Welfare Services

Attachment (1)

cc: Jack Rogers
Child Welfare Team Leaders
Children's Programs Representatives
Local Business Liaisons