



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

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Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

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February 18, 2008

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: FEDERAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER VISIT BASELINE DATA

This letter is a follow up to the data your county provided related to capturing caseworker visits with foster children. As you will recall, a series of communications was sent related to this process. The first, a Dear County Director letter dated April 25, 2007 ([FSCWS 33-2007](#)), announced that as part of the allotment for Child and Family Services Act of 2006 ([P.L. 109-288](#)) counties would receive a special funding allocation which required no local match for foster care caseworkers. That letter also explained that North Carolina's mechanism for verifying monthly visits would be the use of the MRS database to capture these visits. The next two communications were dated June 29, 2007. Administrative Letter ([PM-REM-AL 06-2007](#)) outlined how the MRS database had been modified to begin capturing monthly social worker visits with children in care as of July 1, 2007 and the Dear County Director letter ([FSCWS 45-2007](#)) clarified that certain categories of caseworker visits with foster children would not be captured in the MRS database. On October 19, 2007 a Dear County Director ([FSCWS 72-2007](#)) letter reminded counties to enter the data of their monthly visits with foster children in order to avoid serious financial consequences. Finally, a Dear County Director letter dated October 25, 2007 ([PM-REM-AL 10-2007](#)) reminded counties that foster care visits could not be captured in the MRS database unless the child's CPS Assessment information had already been entered into that database. This letter also described how to capture visits for foster children whose CPS assessment was completed prior to the county's implementation of MRS and explained that foster care visits of transfer cases could not be captured by the MRS database.

North Carolina initially intended to use the information captured through the MRS database to provide the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) a representative sample from the cases entered between the dates of July 1, 2007 and October 31, 2007. This plan was rejected by ACF the day prior to the date that the data was due. Instead, ACF is requiring North Carolina to submit caseworker visit data for a representative sample of all foster care cases for the entire federal fiscal year.

As a result North Carolina has been asked to retroactively capture caseworker visits with children in foster care for Federal Fiscal Year 2007 (October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007). Rather than capture visits for all foster children in care during those months for all 100 counties, ACF has agreed that we can provide a representative sample for this data submission. There are 81 counties that will need to submit this retroactive data.

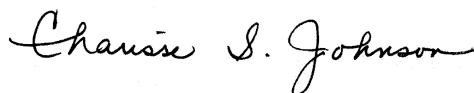
Attached to this letter, all counties with the exception of: Alleghany, Anson, Camden, Caswell, Chowan, Clay, Duplin, Gates, Granville, Greene, Hyde, Jones, Pamlico, Perquimans, Richmond, Swain, Tyrell, Warren, and Washington will find a list of SIS Identification numbers along with their corresponding AFCARS record number for the sample cases needing to be captured for your county. There are a total of 395 cases throughout the

state needing data submission within the 81 counties represented in this sample. This means that there is an average of 5 cases per county for which data needs to be submitted. Since each county has been capturing visits for foster children as of July 1, 2007 counties may only have to enter visits for foster children for eight months (or for a shorter time frame if the child came into or left care between October 1, 2006 and June 29, 2007). There may be children in this sample that are not tracked in the MRS database as outlined in [FSCWS 45-2007](#). For these cases, counties do not have to enter caseworker visit data as this is an acceptably small percentage of children in care (statewide) and should not have a significant impact on North Carolina's visit rates. Counties are still unable to enter foster care caseworker visits for their children in care when the CPS Assessment was completed in another county (transfer cases). Therefore, if any of these sample cases fall within that category they, also, are exempt from caseworker visit data entry.

For all other cases, counties included in this sample are to enter data on at least one visit for every child listed on the sample sheet for each month that the child was in care between October 1, 2006 and September 30, 2007. If more than one visit was made, counties should be sure to enter data on any visit(s) that occurred in the child's place of residence. Counties are encouraged to enter all visits for each child for every month including partial months. All 100 counties are also reminded that it is imperative to continue to capture all monthly foster care caseworker visits using the MRS database as ACF will continue to draw North Carolina's sample from these visits. In the future, verification that visits within a selected sample may be sent to any of the 100 counties on an annual basis.

This data will need to be entered into the MRS database no later than the close of business on Friday, March 7, 2008. Attached only to the hardcopy version of this you will find a listing of the SIS Identification Numbers (along with that child's corresponding AFCARS Record Number) for the children in your county's custody for whom visits must be captured. The sample list will not be attached to the e-mailed version of this letter. Your Children's Program Representative (CPR) has a copy of the sample cases to be entered for your county and will also be contacting you regarding this issue. If you have questions related to this letter or about entering the data into the MRS database, please contact R. Patrick Betancourt at 919-733-4622 or at patrick.betancourt@ncmail.net.

Sincerely,



Charisse Johnson, Chief
Family Support and Child Welfare Services

CSJ/rpb

Enclosure: County Specific NC Foster Care Caseworker Visit Sample Cases (FFY 2007 Baseline)
Cc:

Sherry Bradsher
JoAnn Lamm
Sarah Barham
Children's Program Representatives
Work First Representatives
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Local Business Liaisons

FSCWS-06-08