



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

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Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director  
(919) 733-3055

April 25, 2007

**Dear County Director of Social Services**

### **SUBJECT: FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER VISITS FUNDING**

The Division of Social Services is pleased to announce that for SFY 2006-07, county departments of social services will receive a special funding allocation in July 2007 for foster care caseworkers. The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-288) appropriates \$40 million for FFY 2006 in Title IV-B, subpart 2, program mandatory funds for States to spend through September 30, 2009. North Carolina's share of this allotment for the current state fiscal year is \$1,194,760.00. **No local match is required as a condition for receipt of these funds.** The Division of Social Services will receive an award letter for the next allocation in October 2007. These funds will be dispersed to the counties at that time.

P.L. 109-288 creates a set-aside to support State spending on monthly caseworker visits for FY 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Funds are to support monthly caseworker visits with children who are in foster care under the responsibility of the State, with a primary emphasis on activities designed to improve caseworker retention, recruitment and ability to access the benefits of technology. The following is a sample of activities that can be reimbursed for foster care caseworkers through this funding: recruitment campaigns, increasing salaries, providing bonuses, training, travel reimbursement and enhancing technology. Other expenditures are acceptable if they can be tied to retention and recruitment. Please note that fiscal policy for direct charge vs. cost allocation must be followed.

P. L. 109-288 also establishes benchmarks for States to meet federal standards. States in consultation with the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, are required to establish by June 30, 2008, an outline of steps to be taken to ensure that 90 percent of children in foster care are visited by their caseworkers on a monthly basis by October 1, 2011, and that the majority of the visits occur in the residence of the child. States will also have to establish guidelines for monthly visits that are consistently used by all foster care caseworkers in their respective states. The Division of Social Services is currently working with The UNC School of Social Work to pilot an instrument that will meet federal standards.

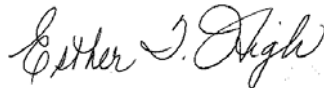
States will also have to develop a mechanism to verify that monthly visits are occurring as well as documentation regarding the visits. North Carolina will use the MRS database to

collect this information. You will be notified through separate communication when the MRS database is available to receive this information. The documentation must reflect where the visits occurred (foster home, school, worker's office, etc.). Please note that the majority of these visits should be in the foster home (in a six month period of time, four of the required visits should be in the foster home). We will continue to advise you of further requirements and procedures as we receive information from the pilot project and from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

After consulting with the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services, the Division of Social Services will distribute the funds to county departments of social services based on an average of children in custody for each quarter of FFY ending September 30, 2006. The attached document specifies the funding available to each county department of social services. Activities related to caseworker visits with children in foster care, day sheet codes should be coded to either Service Code 109 or 119 and Program Codes N, P, R, V, X, 0 (zero) and 9. 1571 preparers will use the Monthly Caseworker Visits funds first for caseworker visits and expenditures to support caseworker visits. When used for caseworker visits use the Monthly Caseworker Visits funding source for children who are not eligible for Title IV-E funds. The Controller's Office will be issuing a Dear County Director letter identifying the new application codes in the next few weeks. The new codes will be available for July services reported for reimbursement in August.

Questions related to fiscal issues should be directed to your Local Business Liaison. Questions related to program issues should be directed to Bob Hensley, Manager, Regulatory and Licensing Services at [Bob.Hensley@ncmail.net](mailto:Bob.Hensley@ncmail.net) or (828) 287-6898.

Sincerely,



Esther T. High, Acting Chief  
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Section

Attachment:

[WEB Caseworker Visits Allocation -1](#)

ETH/bh

cc: Sherry Bradsher  
Jo Ann Lamm  
Sarah Barham  
Children's Program Representatives  
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders  
Local Business Liaisons  
Work First Representatives  
Regulatory & Licensing Services Consultants

**FSCWS-33-07**