



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

325 North Salisbury Street • 2408 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408
Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

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

June 5, 2006

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: Work First Program Administrators and Supervisors

SUBJECT: Work First Biennial County Planning

It is time again to begin the Work First Biennial Planning for the Federal Fiscal years 2007-2009. Because of the proposed federal legislative changes, the process will most likely differ from the previous years. The Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005 and some planned programmatic changes will have an impact on Work First. The impact of DRA and the proposed changes have not been fully determined. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) has been reauthorized through FFY 2010 and as more information becomes available, we will provide additional guidance around the impact of federal regulations and any subsequent programmatic changes.

As you know, each county must notify the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as to whether they select Standard or Electing County status. Use the attached form to notify the DHHS of your county status decision by **August 31, 2006**. The decision must have the support of three-fifths of your county commissioners.

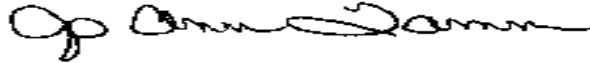
We understand that planning can be challenging with the many variables of uncertainty that currently exist. Designating Standard or Electing can be equally as difficult. North Carolina General Statute §108-A (e) Part 2 allows that counties desiring to redesignate their county status must notify the Department in writing at least six months prior to the effective date of the next State Plan, which is March 30, 2007 for this State Plan cycle. In the request for redesignation, the county must submit documentation that three-fifths of its county commissioners support the redesignation. This provision gives each county an opportunity to ensure the most appropriate designation.

It should be noted that funds available for distribution to electing counties will be adjusted based on State and/or Federal legislation. When counties are preparing their plan and deciding whether to change or remain as standard or electing, they need to be cognizant that any estimates received from the state DSS Budget Office will be based on current available dollars and subject to change based on legislative decisions. In addition, the number of electing counties approved by the General Assembly will affect the state/federal dollar ratio for electing counties in the Work First Block Grant, as well as amounts appropriated by the legislature.

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Attached you will find a Standard/Electing County Status form. In the near future, you will receive directives on developing your county block grant plan. To ensure complete and comprehensive information, we will pend the planning requirements until the Interim Federal regulations are made available. Questions regarding this matter should be directed to your Work First Representative or Carla McNeill on the Work First/CPS Policy Team at (919)733-4622.

Sincerely,



Jo Ann Lamm, Chief
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Section

JAL:cem
Attachment

cc: Sherry Bradsher
Sarah Barham
Jane Smith
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Children's Programs Representatives
Work First Representatives
Local Business Liaisons

FSCWS-35-06

_____ County, North Carolina

Request for Standard or Electing Status for the Work First Program

The Board of Commissioners of _____ County voted on _____
to request **Standard** or **Electing** (Check one) Status for the Work First Program.
(date)

The vote was ____ for and ____ against (at least two-thirds in favor).

Commission Chair Signature

Date

The primary contact person for our Work First Block Grant planning process will be:

Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Due Date: August 31, 2006

Submit to: Sara Anderson Mims, Program Administrator
Work First/CPS Policy Team
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Section
North Carolina Division of Social Services
325 N. Salisbury St.
2408 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2408
Fax: (919) 715-6714