



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

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Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

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

September 9, 2008

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: Work First Program Managers and Supervisors

SUBJECT: 2008-2009 Allocations for Work First Functional Assessments

The Division issued [Administrative Letter FSCWS 15-08](#) on July 29, 2008 that provided advanced notice regarding funding for Work First Functional Assessments in the amount of \$2,721,787 for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2008-2009. This letter provides guidance for the use of these funds.

Functional Assessment costs will be reimbursed to County Departments of Social Services at 100 %, if the assessment meets the definition for Functional Assessments. Functional Assessments are classified in the following two (2) categories: Functional Evaluation and/or a Vocational Assessment. Please see the below definitions for each category:

- A Functional Evaluation (FE) is an attempt to document a person's ability to work. This is done by any number of procedures, including questionnaires and observations that document the person's ability to perform work from a physical, medical, behavioral or mental perspective. FE is typically performed by facilities specializing in Physical Therapy and/or Rehabilitation Services.
- A Vocational Assessment (VA) is an individualized process that includes gathering data and reviewing information about an individual's abilities, skills, interests and readiness for employment. This is done by several procedures, including psychological and academic testing, observations, interviewing, dexterity and motor skills tests. In many settings vocational assessment is carried out by a team that may include (depending on the setting and person's disability) specialists from fields such as occupational therapy, rehabilitation medicine or psychiatry, psychology, social work, vocational guidance, education and rehabilitation.

County allocations will be based on the number of incapacitated participants with the work code of "F" as identified on the Work First Able-Bodied Report for August 2008. Reimbursement for these services was effective July 1, 2008. Reimbursement can be claimed through the DSS-1571 process beginning with August services reimbursed September 2008. Allocation amounts, reporting procedures, and reimbursement codes are forthcoming.

Remember, as county contracts are developed adhere to contract requirements as outlined in the online DSS Budget Information Section at <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/budget/county.htm>. Please contact your Local Business Liaison (LBL) regarding contract questions. A guide of Community Rehabilitation Programs and Support Employment Programs is attached for your reference. This guide is a list from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to assist you in identifying providers in your county.

The Division has assigned a consultant to each county to assist you with the implementation of this practice. A list of counties with your assigned consultant is attached for your reference. If additional funding is needed

after the allocations have been awarded, or if you are a county that did not receive an allocation because your county currently does not have any "F" work coded participants, please submit an email request to your assigned Work First Consultant when funds are needed.

Please be advised that the Work First Functional Assessment funds are available until funds are depleted. Therefore, it is essential that agencies submit payment requests as soon as possible and request funds as soon as they are needed. Failure to do so may result in non-reimbursement if all funds have been depleted.

Spending rates will be monitored throughout the remainder of 2008 and, if necessary, a reallocation process will be established in January 2009 based on the funds unspent as of December 31, 2008. This reallocation process will assist in ensuring that additional eligible participants receive an assessment.

The Division thanks you for your commitment to the Work First Program and looks forward to partnering with you through this new opportunity. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Judy.Lawrence@ncmail.net, (336) 227-2063 or Tracy.Hicks@ncmail.net, (919) 250-7885.

Sincerely,



Charisse Johnson, Chief
Family Support and Child Welfare Services

Attachments:

[Work First Able-Bodied Report – August 2008](#)

[Work First Functional Assessment Contact List 2008-2009](#)

[Community Rehabilitation Programs and Support Employment Programs Guide](#)

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher
Jo Ann Lamm
Sarah Barham
Hank Bowers
Debbie Hawkins
Myra Dixon
Local Business Liaisons
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Work First Local Support Team Members

FSCWS-49-08