



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

Pat McCrory
Governor

Aldona Z. Wos, M.D.
Ambassador (Ret.)
Secretary DHHS

Wayne E. Black
Division Director

January 15, 2014

Dear County Managers and Directors of Social Services:

As we begin a new year, county Departments of Social Services will experience both challenges and opportunities. The implementation of the Affordable Care Act will result in all applications, recertifications and changes being completed in NC FAST. New MAGI rules will govern recertifications for Family and Children's Medicaid. We will receive thousands of health insurance applications through the Federally Facilitated Marketplace to be evaluated for Medicaid eligibility.

One opportunity that is being made available to county Departments of Social Services is 75% Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for eligibility activities for all Medicaid programs that are performed in NC FAST. This will include case processing time involved with completing applications, recertifications, and changes for Medicaid cases. While the 50% Federal reimbursement will continue to apply to such Medicaid activities as outreach and marketing, staff development and training, program integrity, appeals and other activities, we believe that this opportunity will significantly impact the ability of county Departments of Social Services to better serve our public assistance recipients in North Carolina. Eligibility activities performed in EIS are not eligible for 75% Federal reimbursement. This provides an incentive to fully convert to the NC FAST system.

We are aware that many counties have made significant investments in the employment of temporary staff, overtime compensation, equipment and bandwidth upgrades, and other resources over the past couple of years as we have implemented NC FAST. We commend you for your efforts. The State has also invested significant resources in providing support and assistance to assure timely processing. As noted in the Dear County Managers and Social Services Director letter of December 5, 2013 (attached) and Dear County Director Letters of December 20, 2013, and December 27, 2013 (attached), it is imperative that we continue to work together to assure timely and accurate case processing in our public assistance programs. To that end, it is critical that counties invest budgeted county dollars as needed to achieve mandated case processing requirements.

We will be collaborating with county Directors of Social Services to develop action plans to include specific steps to be taken to achieve and maintain case processing requirements in all public assistance programs. A template will be provided to all DSS Directors.

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We have found through county experiences that the implementation of effective staffing alignment, work flow and other business processes has significantly enhanced achievement of case processing outcomes. Staff from our Department will be available to assist counties in assuring that best practices are in place. We will also be providing accurate reports on case processing on a regular basis to county DSS Directors.

Further information and instructions for coding and accessing the enhanced funding will be provided in a separate communication from the DHHS Office of the Controller.

Please contact Dean Simpson at 919-527-6330 or by e-mail at dean.simpson@dhhs.nc.gov or Wayne Black at 919-527-6336 or by e-mail at wayne.black@dhhs.nc.gov if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Wayne E. Black

WEB/ag

Attachments