



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

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Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

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

May 19, 2009

Dear County Director of Social Services

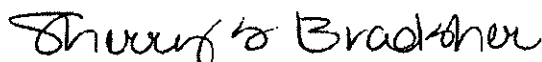
SUBJECT: Local Steps to Address Budget Constraints

During this period of economic stress, state and local governments are faced with budgetary constraints that may restrict the delivery of services to our most vulnerable populations. Our challenge is to maintain access to these needed services and programs and work within the budget constraints we are all experiencing. Governmental bodies across the state are discussing various cost reduction strategies, such as staffing furloughs. Furlough strategies have already been implemented in a few counties. Counties are approaching this option in different ways and are quickly learning from their experiences.

Please note the DSS Dear County Director Letter (DIR-05-2008), that can be accessed at <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/dcdl/dssdirector/DIR-05-2008.pdf> and DMA Dear County Director Letter dated July 31, 2008, that can be accessed at http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/dcdss/073108_4day_work_week.pdf. These letters provide additional information and guidance related to a reduction or change in service hours for the provision of Food and Nutrition Services, Child Support Enforcement Services, Child Welfare Services, Work First Services, Medicaid and the Special Assistance Program. Much of what is in the Division of Social Services' letter would also be relevant for the provision of the Adult Services Programs. We encourage you to review these letters as many of the considerations would apply to staff furloughs as well. Should furloughs become a reality in your county, our Divisions encourage counties to consider applying a staggered staff schedule for current hours of operations as opposed to a complete shut down for one or more days. While our Divisions respect each individual county's need to plan and deal with budget shortfalls, it is important that we provide the necessary information to inform these decisions. Programs administered locally are seeing increases in demand that surpass anything ever experienced by most of us in the field today. It is important to note the timeframes and compliance standards in all program areas remain unchanged.

Our Divisions appreciate your continuing efforts to meet the service needs of our citizens and acknowledge the many challenges we are all facing. If you have questions or need the Divisions' support in this area, please feel free to contact your county operations liaison or the appropriate program representative.

Sincerely,



Sherry S. Bradsher, Director
Division of Social Services



Angela H. Floyd, Assistant Director
Recipient and Provider Services
Division of Medical Assistance



Dennis W. Streets, Director
Division of Aging and Adult Services

Cc: James Clark

Craigan L. Gray, MD, MBA, JD, DMA Director