



Evaluation of Potential Consolidation of Administrative Functions for County Departments of Social Services

Who We Are: North Carolina General Assembly Program Evaluation Division

- Established in 2007 by the Legislature
- More information is available on our website at <http://www.ncleg.net/PED/>

Our Mission (G. S. 120-36.11(a))

- Assist the General Assembly in fulfilling its responsibility to oversee government functions
- Provide an independent, objective source of information
- Evaluate whether public services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner and in accordance with the law

Legislative Mandate for the Evaluation

(Section 10.52, SL 2009-451 as amended by Section 10.20, SL 2010-31)

(a) The Program Evaluation Division of the North Carolina General Assembly shall study the consolidation of administrative functions among county departments of social services. In conducting the study, the Program Evaluation Division shall identify opportunities for functional consolidation, affected administrative functions, estimated cost savings, and requisite policy changes, if applicable, to accommodate the consolidation of administrative functions among county departments of social services. The Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, shall not consolidate these administrative functions except as directed by an act of the General Assembly.

(b) The Program Evaluation Division shall report its findings and recommendations to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, and the Fiscal Research Division by February 1, 2011.

Project Purpose

This evaluation will review the mandated social services programs administered by county departments of social services; identify factors affecting potential consolidation of programs among counties; and identify opportunities for functional consolidation of mandated programs among counties. Findings from this evaluation may generate a range of legislative options providing counties with more flexibility in the organization and delivery of mandated social services programs.

Objectives:

The following questions will serve to guide this evaluation:

- What factors affect whether county departments of social services consolidate the administration of mandated social services programs among counties?
- Are there models in North Carolina or other states for administering state-supervised and county-administered human services programs that would allow the consolidation of the administration of mandated social services?
- If factors inhibiting consolidation are modified, what opportunities exist for consolidating administration of mandated social services among counties, and what potential cost savings are associated with these opportunities?

Data Collection:

Data collection for this evaluation will occur July through October 2010. To reduce the burden on counties, the project team will rely on data the Department of Health and Human Services already receives from counties when possible. County departments of social services will be asked to provide information in four phases:

- Phase 1: Data request for the 100 county department of social services (July)
- Phase 2: Conduct focus groups with small groups of social service directors, social service board members, county commissioners, and county managers (July)
- Phase 3: Survey of the 100 county departments of social services (August)
- Phase 4: Site visits to a sample of county departments of social services (September- October)

Project Team:

Project Lead: Carol Shaw, Principal Evaluator
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