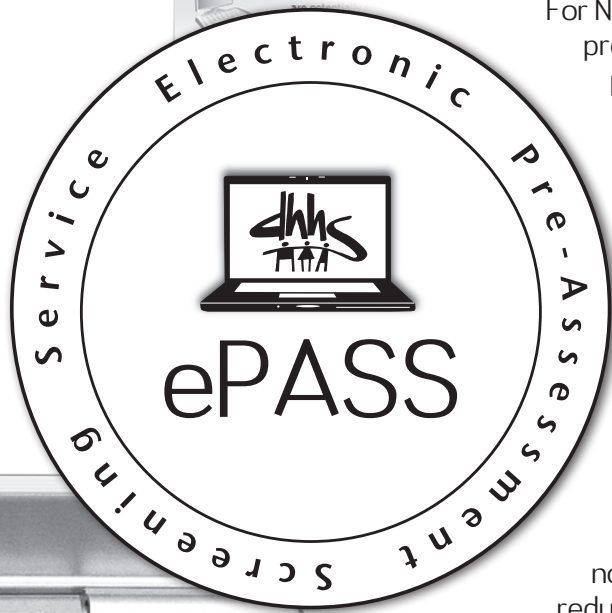


### Welcome to North Carolina

ePASS is short for Electronic Pre-Assessment Screening. It is a quick and easy way for customers to screen for potential eligibility and services that may help them. You can apply for these programs, but you cannot be made until you apply for these services.

To begin the screening process, click on the ePASS icon in the Screening Programs

Am I Potentially Eligible? Click here to see if you are eligible for services.



## What is ePASS?

ePASS is a secure, web-based, self-service tool that enables North Carolinians to screen for potential eligibility for a range of NC benefits and services programs.

For NC residents, ePASS shows the range of programs for which they may be eligible; provides them with information they need to make an informed decision about pursuing program assistance; and simplifies the process to encourage their participation.

For the county departments of social services, ePASS aims to improve effectiveness, efficiency and flexibility for caseworkers and agencies by reducing staff workload. The intent is to streamline the application process so that people don't need to wait in lines if they aren't potentially eligible, or do not have all required paper work, thereby reducing demands on county departments of social services.

To obtain benefits and services, individuals must still submit an application for assistance to the appropriate agency, and provide all necessary information in order to be approved.

## How do we use ePASS?

ePASS will be available over the Internet. Individuals can use ePASS from the privacy of their home or from any Internet location. This process is anonymous; it will not request or record personal information that identifies the individual.

## Which programs are included?

Initially, ePASS will allow individuals to selfscreen for participation in the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Program, Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Emergency Assistance, Work First Cash Assistance, and Crisis Intervention Program (CIP). Other programs will be added as future enhancements, and may include:

- Disaster FNS
- Child Care Assistance
- Medical Assistance

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## Why do we need ePASS?

Individuals can save time by completing the online screening before going to local agencies. The screening process will help individuals identify beforehand if they are potentially eligible for benefits or services.

ePASS provides a list of documents that the individual will need to bring to the local agency, minimizing return trips needed to supply the documents. These steps will help improve the interview and eligibility determination processes.

## When is ePASS available?

ePASS will be implemented in 3 phases.

**Phase 1** is scheduled for release in July 2010, and will include:

- Quick Screening for FNS, SNAP, CIP, Emergency Assistance and Work First Cash Assistance. Quick Screening provides a quick and easy way to enter minimal information to determine potential eligibility.
- Full Screening for FNS and Emergency Assistance programs. Full Screening asks more comprehensive questions to perform a detailed assessment of potential eligibility.
- Phase 1 also includes a list of documents to bring to the agency when applying for benefits, and it provides links to and from N.C. DHHS, N.C. DSS, NCcareLINK and other websites.

**Phase 2** will enable individuals to answer FNS interview questions, print the application and then mail, fax or bring it to the agency.

**Phase 3** will enable individuals to fill out the FNS application online and submit it electronically (no printout needed); check application status; and schedule appointments with caseworkers. The estimated completion date is the second quarter of 2012, which coincides with the implementation of NC FAST Global Case Management and FNS.

\*\*\* Screening for other programs and new features will continue to be added to ePASS.

## What are some benefits and features?

Benefits include:

- Easy-to-use instructions that guide individuals through the screening process.
- Can be used anonymously.
- Can be used 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Requires minimal data entry, no detailed information and no agency contact.

Features included in future releases:

- Online information in multiple languages.
- Filling out program applications online and submitting them electronically.
- Printing completed applications and other high-level information as PDF documents.
- Checking application status.
- Scheduling appointments with caseworkers.

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## Contact DSS

If you have questions, please call your local department of social services or the FNS Customer Service Center at 1-888-622-7328.

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