



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ECONOMIC & FAMILY SERVICES

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH  
SECRETARY

WAYNE E. BLACK  
SR. DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL SERVICES  
AND COUNTY OPERATIONS

September 21, 2017

**Dear County Directors of Social Services**

**Attention:** Work First Program Administrators, Managers and Supervisors

**Subject:** Work First Program Block Grant Planning Cycle for 2019 – 2022 TANF State Plan

The Division is officially beginning the Work First Program Block Grant planning cycle for Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2019 – 2022 TANF State Plan. This letter provides guidance and deadlines for the Work First Program Block Grant planning cycle.

**Electing County Status**

Electing Counties are required to submit an Electing County Status Designation Form to the Division of Social Services to continue or discontinue their Electing County status each Work First planning cycle. The following counties are presently in Electing County status: Beaufort, Caldwell, Catawba, Lenoir, Lincoln, Macon, and Wilson. All Electing Counties Work First Block Grants are subject to the General Assembly appropriation provisions.

The deadline to return the attached Electing County Status Designation Form for FFYs 2019 - 2022 is **November 1, 2017**. The decision must have the support of three-fifths of the Electing County's Board of Commissioners. Designation forms with original signatures must be submitted to the Division of Social Services no later than the established deadline. If the designation form is provided after the deadline, the Electing County will be re-designated as a Standard County.

**Electing County Work First Block Grant Planning**

Preparations should begin now in the development of the Work First Block Grant plan for FFYs 2019-2022 for Electing Counties. Electing Counties must involve multiple community partners in the planning process for the Work First Block Grant. This is an opportunity for Electing Counties to take advantage of the localized flexibility provided in the Work First program. Current and/or former Work First recipients, employers, childcare providers, child welfare staff, community advocacy agencies, and others may prove to be valuable resources in this planning process.

**The North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) automated case management system will not support Electing County policies that differ from Standard County policies as outlined in the Work First manual.** The Electing County Work First Block Grant plans are due to the Division of Social Services no later than close of business on **November 1, 2017**.

### **Standard County Work First Block Grant Planning**

All Standard Counties will remain in Standard County status for this planning cycle. Standard Counties do not have to return a plan or survey to the Division. Community meetings are not required, but strongly encouraged because they can assist and provide opportunities to promote a mutual understanding of the agencies and/or programs, long-term collaboration, employment, and family centered services for families in North Carolina.

Standard Work First counties must have the current information and/or detailed policy criteria on the below items placed on file at the county department/agency of Social Services by the beginning of each State Fiscal Year (SFY) for Work First program compliance. This will ensure fair and equitable services to all North Carolina citizens and compliance with federal and state regulations. Counties are subject to monitoring findings without current SFY information on file.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), contract, or protocol for collaboration, etc. with the below agencies:

- Division of Workforce Solutions – NCWorks Career Centers
- Domestic Violence Agency
- Local Management Entity – Manage Care Organization
- Vocational Rehabilitation

Local policy for the following services (guidelines specified, payment limits, etc.)

- Benefit Diversion Survey for current SFY
- Emergency Assistance
- Exemption from the work requirement for single parents of children under age one
- Services for low-income families at or below 200% or 150% of the Federal Poverty Level
- Services for non-custodial parents (service optional)
- Transportation

Please see the attached Electing County Work First Planning Submission Instructions Outline for your reference and the Electing County Status Designation Form (FFYs 2019 – 2022) for submission. If you have questions regarding this information, contact [Mekella.Anthony@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Mekella.Anthony@dhhs.nc.gov) or (919) 527- 6314.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Chief  
Economic and Family Services

Attachments (2)

[Electing County Status Designation Form](#)  
[Submission Instructions Outline](#)

**EFS-WF-08-2017**