



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

Economic Independence Section • 325 North Salisbury Street  
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Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Carmen Hooker Buell, Secretary

Pheon E. Beal, Director  
(919) 733-3055

**December 13, 2001**

**Re: Work First Performance Goals  
2001-2002**

**Dear County Director of Social Services:**

**Attention: Work First Supervisors  
Income Maintenance / Family Support Supervisors  
Work First Case Managers**

In accordance with North Carolina Session Law 2001 and the North Carolina State Plan for Work First, the Division, in consultation with the county departments of social services, has established Work First performance goals for the State Fiscal Year 2001-2002. The goals reflect our continuing commitment to providing families with an employment focus while providing the basic supports needed to address barriers faced by families entering the workforce.

The TANF State Plan for North Carolina includes two new performance goals for the next biennium: Providing Employment Services and Employment Retention. All evidence points to the need for adults to engage in activities preparing for employment or resolving issues that prevent them from becoming self-sufficient. The Providing Employment Services goal measures the numbers of adults who have hours of activities scheduled in the Employment Programs Information System (EPIS). Once an adult obtains employment, it is important that employment be retained as the stepping stone to earnings gain and promotion. The Employment Retention goal measures the numbers of adults who left Work First for work and are employed at six and 12 months following their exit from Work First. The quarterly wage files of the Employment Security Commission will be matched with the adults who leave Work First for employment to obtain this data.

There are two goals which are required by federal law as part of "The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996:" the All-Parent Participation Rate, which increased to 50% beginning October 1, 2001; and the Two-Parent Participation Rate, which will remain at 90%.

We will continue to provide indicators of performance and management consultation through our Work First field staff and the central office staff to county departments of Social Services to assist in meeting these goals for the Work First Program. One way that the central office will provide information to counties is through the Work First Performance Report, which is available in NC X/PTR now for July, August and September 2001. This report is listed as DHRWRA WORKFIRST PERFORMANCE RPT. The report for each month should be available by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Each county can view their county's data, as well all other counties' and the state totals. Please add this report to your FAVORITES list in X/PTR.

We are committed to helping you in any way to serve the families that need our services. If you have questions regarding this letter or the attached goals, please contact your Regional Work First Representative or the Performance Reporting staff at (919) 733-7831.

Sincerely,

Wilbert R. Morris, Chief  
Economic Independence Section

SM:ce  
Attachments  
EI-30-2001

## **WORK FIRST PERFORMANCE GOALS**

SFY 2001-2002

### **I. Meeting all parent and two-parent federal participation rate**

The all-parent participation rate requirement is 45% for July – September 2001 and 50% beginning October 1, 2001 through September 2002.

Two-parent participation rate requirement rate is 90%.

States have no control over the work participation rate goals. They are contained in the federal regulations for TANF published by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Department of Health and Human Services.

### **II. Reducing the Work First Caseload**

We are not setting a goal for statewide or county-by-county caseload reduction at this time. We will be monitoring the Work First caseload carefully over the year, and will analyze caseload size in relation to economic conditions at the end of the state fiscal year.

### **III. Adults Entering Employment**

The employment goal was established by using the actual average first of month caseload for 2000-01, then determining what economic tier designation was assigned to each county. The staff then used the actual number of adults who entered employment in 2000-01 and computed the percentage of able-bodied adults who entered employment (88.0016%). Considering that the caseload is composed of adults who may present multiple barriers and require longer to attain employment, it was decided to set the percentage to enter employment to begin at 75% for Tier 5 counties (least disadvantaged) and to end at 71% for Tier 1 counties (most disadvantaged). This goal will be tracked by using the E&T indicator from EIS and will be an unduplicated count of adults who have a 1 or 3 entered into that field in the Eligibility Information System (EIS) to indicate employment.

### **IV. Staying off Welfare After Going To Work**

This goal will track the number of families who leave Work First because of earnings, using the appropriate codes (65,19,5M,1K,6U or 34) for transfer to Medicaid. We will search the EIS tables for these families to determine if they have returned to Work First in the report month one year following their exit from Work First cash assistance.

### **V. Increasing Child Support Collections and Orders**

To determine the goal for Child Support collections, the annual TANF and former TANF collections for 2001-01 were increased by the 4%. The report reflects the actual TANF and former TANF child support collections.

The number of TANF cases under order as of June 2001 is the base month used in determining the goal. The goal was established by increasing this total by 3%.

The data for each of these goals will come from the ACTS system.

The ability/inability of each county to achieve the established goals can be attributed to various reasons. For example, a high performing county may have a more difficult time increasing collections than a county at a lower performance level. The ability of a county to meet these specific goals does not necessarily reflect on the counties overall performance and ability to provide child support services.

## **VI. Avoiding Dependency through Benefit Diversion**

Counties have provided Benefit Diversion payments to an increasing number of families each year. Based on the rate of increase in providing diversion payments, the statewide goal was increased to 10,000 for 2001-2002. Each month we will search the EIS system and sum the number of applications entered into EIS for the month with an A9 disposition, indicating Benefit Diversion Payment to the family.

## **VII. Providing Employment Services**

This goal addresses the number of adults in the Work First caseload who are actively receiving intensive employment services. This is indicated by an individual having hours of activities scheduled in the EPIS system for a given month. Because Work First policy provides for a three month period following initial application approval before adults must participate in work or work-related activities, we will begin looking for adults in the first month that they are active in Work First, but an adult will not be in the “denominator” during the first 3 months of Work First unless they are also in the “numerator”, meaning hours of activities, including assessment, are scheduled in EPIS. Beginning with the 4<sup>th</sup> month of participation, we will search EPIS for each case containing adults to determine if hours of activity are scheduled.

Because of the federal requirement to meet a 50% all-parent rate and a 90% two-parent participation rate, counties need to be working with 75% of the single adult caseload and 100% of the two-parent caseload for scheduling activities to prepare adults for self-sufficiency.

## **VIII. Employment Retention**

Each month a file will be transmitted to the Employment Security Commission containing the Social Security Numbers of adults who left Work First one year ago for excess earnings (using the codes entered into EIS for transfer to Medicaid or case termination). ESC will match the Social Security numbers with their wage files for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter following the report month to determine if they had earnings in the 6<sup>th</sup> month and 12<sup>th</sup> month following exit. The goal is to have 60% retention at 6 months and 50% retention at 12 months.