



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

• 325 North Salisbury Street •

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Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

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

September 3, 2004

Re: Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) Monitoring

Dear County Director of Social Services:

The purpose of this letter is to share with you the findings of the recent CIP reviews completed by monitoring staff for State Fiscal Year 2004. These reviews were in addition to the self-monitoring that has been in place for some time. Monitors used the CIP automated system data to select a random sample of approved and denied applications for regular CIP and post-Isabel disaster CIP, which was tracked separately in the system. Reports produced by the system were also reviewed to evaluate potential error cases and to determine whether follow-up had been made on them. A total of 40 counties were included in the review.

Review findings included the following:

- Cases in Pending status well beyond the 48 hour crisis response time
- Applications denied with little or no documentation regarding the denial reason
- Duplicate cases entered in the system that resulted in overpayments
- Duplicate cases identified through the address match report caused by insufficient research on adult household members, some resulting in overpayments
- Use of the "Other" code for crisis reason with no documentation
- Use of the "Other" code for denial reason with no documentation
- Disaster CIP applications approved with no reference to how Hurricane Isabel contributed to the crisis reason
- Disaster CIP applications approved in excess of the \$300 limit for a single application

There were also isolated findings of inappropriate CIP payments made to a motel and a drug rehabilitation center for rent and insufficient communication between the DSS and the agency to which CIP is contracted.

The CIP automated system is now a year old. There have been a number of enhancements and minor modifications to make it easier to enter and track applications correctly. The findings of this review present an opportunity for all counties to evaluate local procedures and ensure that information in the CIP system is accurate and documented sufficiently to support the decision made on each case. We encourage you to conduct an internal review of CIP by:

- Regular evaluation of the “Applications Keyed Listing” report of pending cases
- Regular evaluation of the “DSS CIP Cases with Matching” reports that identify potential error cases based on SSN, address and exact name. Cases appear on these reports immediately after approval.
- Conducting refresher training with staff on requirements for data entry in the CIP automated system and the importance of sufficient documentation to support the decision made on each application.
- Follow up on error cases to recoup overpayments
- Establish regular contact and conduct spot checks of approved and denied applications to ensure compliance with CIP rules and procedures if CIP is contracted to an outside agency.

If you have any questions, please contact your Food Assistance and Energy Programs Representative.

Sincerely,

Jane Schwartz, Chief
Economic Services Section

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