



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

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February 26, 2014

Dear County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Economic Services Program Managers and Supervisors
County Fiscal Officers

SUBJECT: 75% FFP for Medicaid Administration; Health Choice and Family and Children's Medicaid
Coding; Use of NC FAST Service Codes for FNS/SNAP Service Activity

The purpose of this letter is to address several important issues having to do with workers coding time on the DSS-4263 Worker Daily Report of Services to Clients (aka, Day Sheet) in relation to time spent working in NC FAST. Some of this information will be shared with counties in other formats, but it is hoped this letter will add clarity and emphasis to those communications. As such, please share this information with appropriate staff in your agency.

75% FFP for Medicaid Administration

Recently issued [Dear County Director Letter DIR-01-2014](#) (January 14, 2014) addressed, in part, the new opportunity made available to county Departments of Social Services for 75% Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for eligibility and case management activities for certain Medicaid programs that are performed in NC FAST, including case processing time involved with completing applications, recertifications, and changes for Medicaid cases. The following information will help clarify how counties can access this enhanced rate.

Services Information System User Manual update number [CN-SIS-02-13](#) introduced three Service Codes to be used by workers to record time spent taking applications and performing case-related activities in NC FAST. These Service Codes are:

890 – NC FAST – Case Management

891 – NC FAST – Applications

892 – NC FAST – Recertifications

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Instructions for use of these codes were included in the Change Notice and more detailed information was provided via a recorded presentation that may still be accessed at <https://dss.ncgovconnect.com/ncfasttime/>. If you have not reviewed these materials you may find it helpful to do so now. Keep in mind that some of the timeframes mentioned in the presentation have been pushed back, but the information is, for the most part, still applicable.

As of March 1, 2014, use of the three “NC FAST” Service Codes (890, 891, and 892) with SIS Program Codes “MA” (Medicaid Administration) or “SA” (State/County Special Assistance) on the DSS-4263 will result in the worker’s time being reimbursed at the new 75% FFP rate. As such, **it is crucial that workers only use Service Codes 890, 891 and 892 to account for time spent using NC FAST to process case actions, applications and/or recertifications. These Service Codes should not be used for any worker time spent performing application or case-related activity not involving the active use of NC FAST.** “Using NC FAST” can be interpreted broadly as long as the worker is logged in and using the system to take applications, process recertifications or perform general case management functions. For example, if you are interviewing or talking with a client in your office or over the telephone about their case, and you are logged into NC FAST, perhaps making notations or updating information in the case record, that time would be considered “using NC FAST”. Furthermore, if you are away from your work station performing case-related activities that will later result in updates to the cases in NC FAST, that time may be considered “using NC FAST” and coded using the NC FAST Service Codes. However, if you are performing activities of a different nature that will not result in taking actions on cases in NC FAST, the time should not be coded as “NC FAST time.” Time spent processing applications or performing case-related activities not involving the use of NC FAST should be recorded on the DSS-4263 using the “old” Income Maintenance Service Codes such as 870 - Eligibility -Family & Children's Medicaid / Health Choice, 875 - Eligibility - Medicaid / Medical Assistance Admin (MA) and 876 - Eligibility - Special Assistance (SAA) (see SIS User’s Manual Appendix B). Time recorded to these “non-NC FAST” Income Maintenance Service Codes will continue to be reimbursed at the 50% (or applicable) FFP rate. Adhering to this practice will insure compliance with policy and provide more accurate data in preparation for implementation of “Plan A” Day Sheet coding for NC FAST workers. (“Plan A” involves the eventual use of a generic “NC FAST” Program Code on the DSS-4263, which, combined with data about applications and case actions from NC FAST, will allow for automatic allocation of worker time across the various fund sources supporting benefit and service programs included in NC FAST. Refer to the recorded presentation at <https://dss.ncgovconnect.com/ncfasttime/> for more information about “Plan A” coding.)

The County Administration Branch of the DHHS Controller’s Office will issue instructions regarding new Part I Application Codes and coding requirements on the DSS-1571 necessary to access the enhanced 75% reimbursement rate. County fiscal staff will also need to set up the appropriate “SIS program to FCP mapping” within the Maximus TEC application.

In summary, it is important, and in the case of Medicaid reimbursement, fiscally advantageous, for workers to code all time spent using NC FAST on the DSS-4263 using Service Codes 890, 891 and 892. Time not using NC FAST, however, should be recorded using the traditional set of Service Codes found in Appendix B of the SIS User’s Manual.

Health Choice, Family and Children’s Medicaid and Use of Service Code 891- NC FAST Applications

Prior to implementation of the NC FAST Service Codes and inclusion of Medicaid programs in NC FAST, counties were instructed to use Service Code 870 - Eligibility -Family & Children's Medicaid / Health Choice with program Code “HC” (Health Choice) to record on the DSS-4263 all worker time spent taking applications for Health Choice and Family and Children’s Medicaid. In the Maximus TEC software used for the preparation of the DSS-1571, time coded to 870-HC is “split” between Health Choice funding and Medicaid funding based on the “Penetration Rate” entered into TEC each month for Health Choice vs. Medicaid.

With implementation of the NC FAST Service Codes, this same arrangement was to be followed in using Service Codes 890, 891 or 892 for recording time spent performing case actions for, taking applications for, or recertifying cases for Health Choice and Family and Children’s Medicaid. Specifically, workers were instructed to code all such time to 890-HC, 891-HC, or 892-HC (as appropriate) on the DSS-4263. Fiscal Staff were to add a Penetration Rate in TEC for the “890-HC”, “891-HC” and “892-HC” combinations (per instructions in the TEC Manual) so as to “split” the time so coded between Health Choice (HC) and Medicaid (MA) funding. Examples of this method of coding were provided in the recorded presentation found at <https://dss.ncgovconnect.com/ncfasttime/>.

It has come to our attention that in some counties, workers may be manually splitting their time between Health Choice (HC) and Family and Children's Medicaid (MA) on the DSS-4263, as would generally be the practice under "Plan B" for use of Service Codes 890, 891 and 892 with most other Program Codes, however this may result in a second "splitting" of the worker's time if the Fiscal staff has set up the "890/891/892-HC Penetration Rates" in TEC. Therefore, we are reminding counties that **workers should use "890-HC", "891-HC" and "892-HC" to record all time spent processing Health Choice and Family and Children's Medicaid case actions, applications or recertifications in NC FAST.** Fiscal staff should be sure to set up the appropriate Penetration Rates in TEC if they have not done so. Finally, it should be noted that, effective March 1, 2014, the portion of time coded to 890-HC, 891-HC and 892-HC "split off" to Medicaid (by application of the Penetration Rates) will be reimbursed at the new 75% FFP rate.

Use of NC FAST Service Codes for FNS/SNAP Applications, Case Actions and Recertifications

As of April 2013, all FNS/SNAP applications and cases were being processed in NC FAST and the old Food Stamp Information System was retired. With the issuance of Services Information System User Manual update number [CN-SIS-02-13](#), counties were instructed to begin using the new NC FAST Service Codes (890, 891 and 892) effective July 1, 2013. Workers were instructed to use these service codes to record all time spent taking applications, conducting case actions and completing recertifications using NC FAST. Because all application and case activity for Food and Nutrition Services was being processed using NC FAST, it was expected that county workers would begin using the new NC FAST Service Codes with Program Code "FS" to record all time related to FNS/SNAP applications and casework. A period of transition was expected while workers adjusted to the new coding requirements, however, we continue to observe from the data that workers are continuing to use the "non-NC FAST" Service Codes on day sheets to record time spent working on FNS/SNAP cases. These codes include:

- 879 - Eligibility - Food & Nutrition Services (FNS)
- 881 - EBT Issuance - FNS
- 882 - EBT Training - FNS
- 883 - Fraud Investigation - FNS (FS)
- 884 - Fraud Investigation - FNS - Non Fraud

It is expected and reasonable that workers would still be using Service Codes 883 and 884 to record time spent working on FNS Fraud cases. Excluding that time, there were still 57 counties coding time on day sheets for FNS/SNAP-related activity in January 2014 using one or more of Service Codes 879, 881 and 882. Across the State, only 8% of the total "non-Fraud" time was coded to the "old" codes, but usage varied widely from county to county. There were 10 counties that coded more than 20% of the "non-Fraud" time to the old Service Codes, with one county using them for 100% of the FNS/SNAP time.

While there may be legitimate reasons for still using these old codes to record a small amount of FNS/SNAP-related time spent not using NC FAST, it is expected that the vast majority, if not all, worker time for FNS/SNAP-related activities should be conducted using NC FAST. As such, use of the old Service Codes listed above should be minimal at most. Certainly no county should be using these codes to record the majority of FNS/SNAP-related time. Please discuss this issue with your Program Managers, Supervisors and workers who take applications for and manage FNS/SNAP cases. Proper coding on day sheets is very important and will be critical as we move to "Plan A" for NC FAST day sheet coding.

If you have any questions about the topics covered in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at Hank.Bowers@dhhs.nc.gov or by calling me at 919-527-6265.

Sincerely,



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