



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for
Human Services

May 24, 2021

Dear County Directors of Social Services

Attention: Work First Managers and Supervisors, Medicaid Managers and Supervisors

Subject: Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance Certifications
4th Extension Period

Priority: Information and Action

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

In response to the continued impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on residents, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), is providing states with an option to request waivers to extend cash assistance and medical assistance for a fourth certification period. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) has accepted this waiver, and will extend the certification periods for all eligible Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) cases for participants with Date of Entry between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2021, with the additional months not extending beyond September 30, 2021.

II. POLICY PROCEDURES

Specifically, upon request, ORR will waive 45 C.F.R. § 400.211, the normal process for determining the eligibility period, and will extend the eligibility period for clients who became eligible for RCA and/or RMA between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2021, with the additional months not extending beyond September 30, 2021. For clients who became eligible for RCA and/or RMA on or after February 1, 2021, the eligibility period will remain eight months.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

The caseworker will key a Forced Eligibility – Cash and/or Medical application on the Income Support Case that contains the Refugee Cash Assistance and/or Refugee Medical Assistance PDC. The Refugee Cash Assistance and/or Refugee Medical Assistance program should be selected. Refer to “Forced Eligibility for Income Support Medical Assistance, Special Assistance & Cash Assistance” in NC FAST Help, for additional assistance.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603
MAILING ADDRESS: 2420 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6300 • FAX: 919-334-1265

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

To prepare for the extension, the following will occur:

1. Refugee Resettlement Agencies will notify the county DSS of which clients may potentially be eligible for extended RCA and/or RMA benefits. After receiving the notification, the caseworker will either reopen or extend RCA and/or RMA cases for all refugee arrivals between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2021, accordingly. Counties will be able to conduct telephonic interviews in-place of face to face interviews.
2. NC FAST will create reports titled "COVID-19: Extend Eligibility Period for Refugee Cash Assistance" and "COVID-19: Extend Eligibility Period for Refugee Medical Assistance" that can be used to confirm the identity of potential clients. The reports are located under Economic Services Reports, RA Section in NC FAST Help. NC FAST will send a communication once the reports are available.

Mapping for the reports:

Economic Services> COVID-19> Reports> Refugee Cash Assistance> COVID-19:
[RCA 8 months ending May2021 Sept2021RCA Closed Apr30 2021](#)

Economic Services> COVID-19> Reports> Refugee Medical Assistance> COVID-19:
[RMA 8 months ending May2021 Sept2021RMA Closed Apr30 2021](#)

REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE

Previous clients whose cases have closed, clients whose cases are about to terminate from the program or who successfully exited the program and then subsequently: lost employment, sustained a reduction in hours, are unable to maintain current employment or are unable to gain employment, and are unable to access unemployment insurance or other COVID-19 pandemic unemployment assistance would requalify for RCA.

1. Client's statement of employment termination or reduction in hours are acceptable.
2. The extension periods will start the following month the client lost employment or experienced a reduction in hours due to COVID-19.
3. County staff must ensure that all RCA recipients are enrolled in and referred for employment services. This may be done either one of two options:

Option 1: Eligibility worker MUST also complete DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice and provide a copy to the newly authorized RCA recipient and to the NC Refugee Service Provider agency, Employment Specialist.

Referral is not complete until the eligibility worker receives Part B of DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice back from the NC Refugee Services Provider agency.

Option 2: If there is not a NC Refugee Service Provider, the local DSS is responsible for providing Employment Services i.e. obtaining a signed Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA) and for the development of both the Family Self-Sufficiency and

Individual Employability Plans when a NC Refugee Service Provider agency is not located in that county.

4. Certification periods will not be extended for clients who became eligible for RCA on or after February 1, 2021, the eligibility period will remain at eight months. These RCA cases will be processed as normal with an 8-month certification process. See examples below:

Scenario one, client A has refugee status; arrived in the United States May 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RCA benefits. RCA eligibility period begin date May 1, 2019 through end date December 31, 2019. Client received RCA for three (3) months, became employed and successfully exited the program in August 2019. Client was laid off in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and has no income. Client reapplies for RCA benefits in April 2020. Client would be eligible for additional months of RCA through September 30, 2021.

Scenario two, client B received granted asylum letter (refugee status) on September 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RCA benefits on November 1st. RCA eligibility period begin date November 1, 2019 through eligibility end date April 30, 2020. Client is now eligible to receive RCA eligibility effective date November 1, 2019 through September 30, 2021.

Scenario three, client C with refugee status of Special Immigrant Visa Holder (SIV) date of entry February 1, 2020. Client was screened and awarded RCA benefits. RCA eligibility period begin date February 1, 2020 through end date September 30, 2021.

REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Previous clients whose cases have closed, clients whose benefits are about to terminate or who successfully exited the program would requalify for RMA.

1. Client's statements are acceptable.
2. The extension period will start on the date of re-application.
3. Certification periods will not be extended for cases that have refugee arrivals who became eligible for RMA on or after February 1, 2021, the eligibility period will remain at eight months. These RMA cases will be processed as normal with an 8-month certification process. See examples below:

Scenario one, client A has refugee status; arrived in the United States on May 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date May 1, 2019 through end date December 31, 2019. RMA benefits exhausted in January 2020. Client is eligible to reapply for extended RMA benefits through September 30, 2021 regardless of income, unemployment benefits or RMA benefits at time of application.

Scenario two, client B received granted asylum letter (refugee status) on September 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits on November 1st. RMA eligibility period begin date November 1, 2019 through eligibility end date April 30, 2020 (total of 8 months from date of eligibility). Client is now eligible to receive extended RMA benefits for an eligibility effective date of November 1, 2019 through September 30, 2021.

Scenario three, client C with refugee status of Special Immigrant Visa Holder (SIV) date of entry February 1, 2020. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date February 1, 2020 through end date September 30, 2021.

The certification extension applies only to cases with Refugee eligible clients who arrived into the United States between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2021. The RCA and/or RMA certification periods can only be extended through September 30, 2021. Submit any questions regarding this information to RefugeeAssistance.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



Carla West, Senior Director for Economic Security
Division of Social Services, Economic and Family Services

CLW/cg

EFS-RA-02-2021