



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEVPUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

CARLA WEST • Division Director, Human Services

Date: 03/28/2025

**Dear County Directors of Social Services**

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

**Subject:** Work First Two - Parent Participation Rate and New Reports

**Priority:** Action Required, Time Sensitive

On December 5, 2024, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) notified the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) that North Carolina did not meet the Two-Parent Work Participation Rate for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023. To improve compliance, additional efforts are required to enhance tracking and engagement of Two-Parent Households.

To support counties in ensuring accurate documentation for Two-Parent Family Cases, two key measures are already in place:

1. **Two-Parent Family Participation Checklist** – Implemented in 2018 as part of the Work First Program, this checklist remains a required tool for managing Two-Parent Households. For guidance on its use, refer to Administrative Letter EFS\_WF\_AL-1-2018.
2. **Active Two-Parent Cash Assistance Cases Report** – Created in 2024 by NC FAST, this report identifies cases where two adults are included in the case. County staff must review this report monthly, on or around the 10th of each month, ensuring that Outcome Plans are open, activities are assigned, and any necessary exemption evidence is documented. The report is available in FAST Help.

Additionally, to strengthen internal controls and improve data accuracy for the Federal Work Participation Rate (WPR), the Division has worked with NC FAST to put a system safeguard in place. This safeguard will prevent payments from being issued when cases including work eligible individuals do not have an open Outcome Plan. The absence of this control has impacted the state's ability to capture all relevant participation for the Federal WPR. Beginning April 12, 2025, case managers will receive a validation message indicating the payment cannot be released due to the absence of an Outcome Plan. NC FAST will send a weekly communication when the report is available for review.

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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To support case managers in taking timely and appropriate actions on cases, the Division has collaborated with NC FAST to create three new reports:

1. **Work First Cases – No Open Outcome Plan Report** – Identifies cases with a work-eligible individual but no open Outcome Plan. Counties must ensure that Outcome Plans are in place, activities are assigned, and exemption evidence is documented where applicable.
2. **Work First Payments on Hold – 3 Months Report** – Identifies cases where payments have been on hold for three months without being released or canceled. Per Work First Policy Section 119.X, payments should be canceled after two months of being on hold.
3. **CA Work Eligible Adults Report** - Captures all cases with a work-eligible individual in the household. The filter feature can be used to determine the number of work-eligible cases within the county. Case managers must verify that each case listed is receiving employment services and that all evidence has been reviewed. Work First Policy Section 103.III.A is the only reference for determining when individuals are exempt from work requirements.

The system recognizes only two exemption reasons that allow payment release:

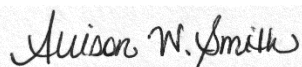
- a) Single custodial parents with a child under 12 months old.
- b) Parents caring for a disabled family member living in the home.

These exemption reasons must be entered at the time of application or when the individual is determined not to be work-eligible. Case managers should reference the Job Aid: "Entering Work First State Exemptions" when documenting exemption evidence. Any other exemption reason will trigger a validation requiring counties to create an Outcome Plan. If exemption evidence is entered for "good cause" (i.e., lack of transportation), it must **not** be entered and left open-ended. Instead, it must be entered after benefit issuance, as outlined in Work First Policy Section 118.

These reports are available in FAST Help and can be accessed from the FAST Help homepage. County staff must review these reports monthly, on or around the 10th of each month. NC FAST Weekly Communications will include when the monthly reports are available for review. A training on these reports will also be conducted at the April 2025 Regional Meeting.

If you have any questions, please submit them to the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team at [dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,



Allison W. Smith, Deputy Director  
Division of Social Services  
Economic and Family Services

AWS/peb

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