

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Jennie Kristiansen, Director

Social Services Board:
Richard Edwards
Thomas Droke
Valerie Broadway
Carl Thompson, Sr.
Cecil Wilson

ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Session Meeting Minutes June 16, 2021

Members in attendance: Richard Edwards, Chair; Thomas Droke, Vice Chair; Valerie Broadway, Member; Carl Thompson, Member; Cecil Wilson, Member and Jennie Kristiansen, Director.

Tom Droke called the meeting to order.

Carl Thompson motioned to approve the May meeting minutes with a second motion from Valerie Broadway; with all in favor.

Cecil Wilson was sworn in as 5th member of the board. Mr. Wilson's three-year term will run through June 30, 2024.

Review of Monthly Data

The board reviewed the monthly data report. CPS timeliness had 30 accepted reports for the month of May. Four cases were initiated outside of timeframe, with a timeliness of 87%. Three were late as part of the household was out of town (in two cases out of state). The fourth was late due to a miscommunication around assignment between supervisors.

Economic Services Updates

Medicaid recipients were auto enrolled in plans in late May and 97% of beneficiaries were enrolled in a plan that included their current primary care provider. Health plan welcome plans were mailed by June 12, 2021, with beneficiaries' deadline of September 30, 2021 to change plans. The week of June 7th, it was announced that approximately 7,000 beneficiaries who were eligible for a tailored plan had selected standard plans. This made them ineligible for some of the services they were receiving or could receive. Given the number of people impacted, the Division of Health Benefits stopped enrollment in standard plans and will keep these beneficiaries in NC Medicaid Direct. They will also receive additional information to make sure that beneficiaries are aware of the potential loss of services if they elect a standard plan.

DHHS was able to provide an additional supplemental payment to recipients of the Low-Income Energy Assistance Payments. These payments were sent out in May.

Several economic services waivers had been approved through December 31, 2021 or until the Governor lifts the emergency declaration in NC. The waivers pertain to program integrity, telephonic signatures, interview waivers for Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). Supplemental benefits for FNS will also be provided for June. Summer Pandemic EBT benefits will be provided for June through August. Eligible children will receive a one time, \$375 payment for this period.

Family Services

There were some temporary changes in support for young adults in foster care that allowed them to continue in foster care through September 30, 2021, regardless of age (and if they exited they can re-enter), employment or education status. The Education and Training Voucher was increased from \$5,000 per year to \$12,000 per year. The voucher covers post-secondary education or training and includes expenses that are not part of the attendance cost.

New requirements were in place for Infant Plans of Safe Care (for substance affected infants) and monitoring of psychotropic medications for children and youth in foster care. For Plans of Safe Care, DSS social workers were highly encouraged to meet with the family prior to discharge from the hospital and required to document more specific and comprehensive plans that include family strengths, nighttime parenting plan, basic needs, and follow up medical care. For psychotropic medications, additional questions were added to the monthly contact record that included a list of each medication, dosage, prescriber, and side effects.

On June 1, 2021, Cardinal Innovations, the Local Management Entity-Managed Care Organization (LME-MCO) announced a merger with Vaya. The recent votes to disengage from Cardinal Innovations by both Mecklenburg and Forsyth Counties created instability within their organization. Vaya serves 22 counties in western NC. In the announcement by DHHS, it was communicated that those beneficiaries should expect to receive the same services and providers should receive the same rates of reimbursement. There will be a transition process that should be complete by June 30, 2022.

Agency Updates

The first site visit for the single county audit began June 12th. This annual audit of county government programs typically involves Medicaid programs, financial reporting, and some child welfare cases.

The annual county employee evaluation process was scheduled to be completed by June 25th. The recommendation by the Manager's Office to the Board of Commissioners is a 3% pay increase.

DSS held the first equity workgroup meeting June 15th. In the meeting, Michelle Wright from the Chatham County Health Department shared information about their work. The group had some general discussion about ideas and will meet again next month. Courtney Jones from Chatham County Human Resources will also share information about the newly formed Equal Employment Opportunity committee at the next meeting.

With no further items to discuss, there was a motion to enter a closed session to discuss a personnel issue from Carl Thompson, with a second motion from Valerie Broadway; with all in favor.



Chair

08.23.2021
Date



Secretary

9/2/21
Date