

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY
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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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489

Richard Edwards
Thomas Droke

Carl Thompson, Sr.

Pastor Cecil Wilson

ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Session Meeting Minutes September 15, 2021

Members in attendance: Thomas Droke, Vice Chair, Valerie Broadway, Member; Cecil Wilson, Member; Carl Thompson, Member; Jennie Kristiansen Director and Nancy Burgess, Executive Assistant.

Tom Droke called the meeting to order.

Cecil Wilson motioned to approve the August minutes, with a second motion from Valerie Broadway; with all in favor.

Review of Monthly Data

Final childcare spending numbers were not yet available and NC Division of Early Education would not be issuing spending coefficients until after the first quarter of the fiscal year. Forty children were removed from the waitlist in September with eligible children being added on to the subsidy program.

CPS accepted 19 reports in August. Six cases were initiated outside of timeframe, with a timeliness of 68%. Two of the reports were initiated within 4 hours of the deadline and involved diligent efforts to locate. In one case, there was a dual county initiation needed where Chatham County initiated within time frames while the other county did not. In another, the case was screened incorrectly by the on-call team due to a question about the caretaker definition and therefore not timely. In two cases, the social worker faced difficulties in contacting the family, leaving voice messages, texts and visiting the home.

Economic Services Updates

The Medicaid managed care transition continued to go fairly smoothly. The Division of Health Benefits extended out of network benefits from 8/30/2021 to the end of November. Beneficiaries could continue to see out of network providers or receive out of network services until November 30, 2021. Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation plans to conduct Division meeting regularly. Plans were working more often with public transportation providers and intended to give public transportation the right of first refusal on trips in some situations. This proved to be challenging in some counties, and as a result, DHB was having daily calls with some health plans to address problems. Locally, some beneficiaries had difficulties with the new transportation requirements with questions being reported to both Chatham Transit (who has a contract with both Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation brokers) and DSS. Medicaid eligibility remained in place for individuals throughout the public health emergency period, which is anticipated to last at least until the end of the year.

There were significant amounts of federal funds that NC was working to disseminated, including energy and water assistance, for individuals and families. A webinar was scheduled the week of September 13th for counties to learn more about Low Income Water Assistance Program and another webinar the previous last week for water vendors. Planning was underway for a new summer cooling program.

The WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) referral program was going very well. In August, 45% (15) of the 33 referrals were made by the DSS Medicaid program. Since starting this referral process in May, 63 people have been referred for the WIC program.

Family Services

Chatham County was scheduled to receive allocations of CARES act funds for child welfare and Links eligible youth. NC DSS urged counties to prioritize serving Links youth ages 21-27 who will not be eligible for services after September 30th. Child welfare funds will be used to purchase additional disinfecting and cleaning supplies for families and county fleet vehicles, portable cribs, video conferencing equipment to allow parents to better participate in meetings virtually, and child abuse prevention/support services for families impacted by the pandemic.

The Administrative Office of the Courts was launching a new interdisciplinary representation program for parents involved in the child welfare system that paired a social worker with the attorney representing the parent. Data demonstrated this to be effective in improving permanency and helped address other problems parents may be facing including housing, legal issues, etc. The program will be available in several judicial districts (yet to be selected).

Agency Updates: Starting October 4th, Chatham County will require proof of COVID vaccination or require weekly testing for unvaccinated employees. Employees vaccinated by October 4th will receive a \$150 bonus incentive.

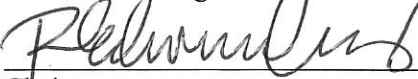
FEMA visited Chatham County September 13th for the Shearon Harris Plant drill. The Emergency Operations Center was activated for the drill exercise. DSS has a role in planning for reception centers and/or sheltering. Overall, the drill went well and FEMA representatives gave positive feedback.

Chatham County DSS was beginning a process, in collaboration with Emergency Management, to update their COOP (Continuity of Operations Plan). The plan serves as a guide for ensuring that county departments are prepared to operate when there is a disaster or other unexpected event. The goal is to incorporate lessons learned after the cyber-attack and sheltering events to clarify essential functions, roles, and other departmental needs (e.g., technology).

The final round of visits for the annual single county audit were scheduled to take place the week of September 20th. The audit is required for all counties each year and typically involve “testing” of the Medicaid program and some children’s services programs. There is also a review of financial reporting and procedures.


With no further items to discuss, there was a motion to adjourn from Tom Droke, with a second motion from Valerie Broadway; with all in favor.

The next meeting will be held virtually on October 20, 2021 via GoToMeeting at 3:00pm.



Chair

6-9-22
Date



Secretary

6/21/22
Date