

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services Board:
Valerie Broadway, Chair
Cecil Wilson, Vice Chair
Sara Welch, Member
Memory Dossenbach, Member

ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Session Meeting Minutes August 16, 2023

Members in attendance: Sara Welch, Member; Memory Dossenbach; Jennie Kristiansen; Director; LeAnn McKcoy, Planner/Evaluator and Nancy Burgess, Executive Assistant.

Sara Welch called the meeting to order.

Without a quorum the June Open and Closed session and July Minutes were tabled for the September Meeting for vote.

Ms. Welch and Ms. Dossenbach reviewed the monthly data report.

Economic Services Updates:

DHHS announced an October 1st launch date for Medicaid expansion. This date was part of a compromise with CMS, the federal agency that oversees the Medicaid program, where DHHS can move forward with the requirements for expansion (e.g., sending notices to beneficiaries, counties, providers) without authority from the General Assembly. For this to happen on October 1st the General Assembly will either need to decouple expansion from the budget bill or pass the budget bill. This is an effort to help with the reduced implementation period. Initially, it was to be 90-120 days and with this change would only be 30. At DSS, the Medicaid supervisor team is in the process of recruiting and hiring for additional positions. A computer order is being placed and space has been identified for the new employees.

Additional Medicaid text messages were added the week of August 14th to communicate with beneficiaries about renewals. Messages included a reminder to ensure contact information is correct and a reminder that their renewal letter was sent in the mail. Several beneficiaries have either called or visited the office with questions regarding the legitimacy of the messages. Almost 1,000,000 text messages have been sent out statewide which has saved case worker time. Basic eligibility information was shared with counties which is as follows:

- Adults ages 19 through 64
- Income equal or less than 133% of the Federal Poverty Level
- Not pregnant
- Not entitled to or enrolled in Medicare A or B
- Not otherwise eligible for or enrolled in a full Medicaid program

- Not eligible if a child is under the age of 21 living in the home and for whom they are parent/caretaker is not covered by any minimal essential coverage

There had been no additional information shared to clarify what each of these criteria mean, as some of them are ambiguous. Across the state, it is anticipated that 600,000 adults across NC will be eligible, half of whom are currently on the Family Planning Program. 100,000 people are currently enrolled, will lose eligibility as a part of the Public Health Emergency unwinding, and 200,000 will be new to the Medicaid program.

Supplemental CIP (Crisis Intervention Program), LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program), and LIHWAP (Low Income Household Water Assistance Program) payments will be issued in October to individuals who received a benefit during the last fiscal year. In Chatham County approximately \$250,000 in payments will be issued. It is not yet known how much each payment will be except that LIHWAP will be \$90 a person.

Family Services Updates:

On July 1st, there was a board rate increase for children in foster care. Rates went up to \$702 for children 0-5, \$742 for children 6-12, and \$810 for children 13 and up. There was also an administrative rate increase to private providers.

In addition to the changes to the CPS intake tool, DHHS is getting close to finalizing a "Systems Integrator" vendor to modify the Child Welfare System (formerly NCFAS) to make it a more user-friendly experience for child welfare professionals across NC. There are 11 counties (including Chatham) that are using the current CWS for ongoing case management and an additional 14 in intake and assessments. This project will be modifying intake and assessments by creating new dashboard, analytics, and other user experience improvements. There will also be updates to the ongoing case management component including a completely new ongoing case management module, mobile capabilities, and interfaces with stakeholder systems such as the Administrative Office of the Courts and Department of Public Instruction.

Agency Updates:

The DSS Workforce Committee planned an "End of Summer Bash" that was held August 15th at lunch. It was well attended and an opportunity to get to know other agency employees.

During the month of July, 30 applications were received for the Emergency Homelessness Assistance Program (EHAP). This is the second month of the program. To date, approximately \$55,000 in rental assistance has been provided.

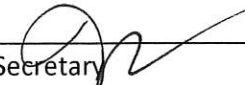
With no further items to discuss, Sara Welch adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 20, 2023 in the ground conference room of CCDSS at 3:00.



Vice Chair

12-20-23
Date



Secretary

12/20/23
Date