

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

CHATHAM COUNTY

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services Board:
Sara Welch
Memory Dossenbach
Cecil Wilson
Peter Varney
Maria Soto

ORGANIZED 1770

707 SQUARE MILES

Chatham County Board of Social Services Session Meeting Minutes January 17, 2024

Members in attendance: Sara Welch, President; Memory Dossenbach Vice Chair; Cecil Wilson, Member; Peter Varney, Member; Jennie Kristiansen; Director and Nancy Burgess, Executive Assistant.

Sara Welch called the meeting to order.

December Meeting Minutes were approved with a motion from Peter Varney, a second motion from Memory Dossenbach with all in favor.

Members reviewed the monthly data report.

Economic Services Updates:

As of 01/08/24 312,000 people statewide have received full Medicaid coverage and the Division of Health Benefits anticipates that the next 300,000 will enroll over the next two years. Locally, case workers have been able to manage Medicaid applications with several volunteers who have been working evenings and weekends to keep up with the workload.

The Federally Facilitated Marketplace (FFM) will start making determinations for NC applicants on February 1, 2024. Approximately 200,000 NC residents who are receiving marketplace coverage will receive a letter stating that they are likely eligible for Medicaid and that they should go into [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) to update their information. Now, the FFM will make the determination for these applicants, rather than the application being sent to the county. If there is a problem with the application at the FFM, then it will go to the county for an eligibility determination. This will likely result in an increase in applications starting in February. There will be a media campaign that goes along with this change that includes commercials, bus wraps, radio ads, etc.

The statewide plan for children in foster care, the Children and Families Services Plan, is still scheduled for implementation in December 2024 but may be extended. A policy paper and press release should be released this week outlining more up to date information regarding the Plan.

In 2024, NC will have a permanent summer EBT program that will provide a supplement for eligible children during the summer months. It is anticipated that USDA will be providing additional guidance soon. This will be administered through NC DSS and the Department of Public Instruction.

Counties also received a report on their performance on the Continuous Coverage Unwinding (CCU) and Franklin v. Kinsley Audits that covered August 2023-October 2023. The CCU refers to the process of

reverting back to pre-pandemic polices after the end of the Public Health Emergency. The Franklin V. Kinsley audits are checking to ensure that when an applicant is denied Medicaid that they are evaluated for all other Medicaid programs prior to the denial being issued. During the three-month period, one eligibility error was identified with an overall accuracy rate of 93.3%. For Franklin v. Kinsley, the overall compliance rate for Chatham County was 91.7% compared to a state average of 75%.

During the month of December, 180 applications were processed for the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) with a 73% approval rate. For January (month to date), 114 applications have been processed with a 70% approval rate. There is approximately \$130,000 remaining in the LIEAP allocation and \$60,000 in the CIP allocation.

Family Services Updates:

Chatham County had an orientation call with NC DSS regarding the implementation of Homebuilders, the first evidenced-based prevention program in NC that will be partially funded by IV-E reforms in the Family First Prevention Services Act (passed in 2018). Families whose children are at risk of entering foster care will be eligible for the program. Training for DSS social workers and supervisors will take place during February. Crossnore Communities for Children will be the provider in Chatham and the program will include 40 hours of support for each family over a four-week period. DSS social workers will be able to also draw down federal revenues for their work with families related to Homebuilders.

Child-Welfare Pre-Service Training, which is required for new social workers has been redesigned and scheduled to be implemented in Region Three (that includes Chatham County) in spring of 2024. This program is being shifted from a 3 week to a five-week program and will be held in-person. The new format is reflective of current child welfare practice and will better prepare social workers for work with families.

NC is one of ten states selected to be a part of a learning collaborative to develop a Multi-Sector Plan on Aging. This work involves government agencies, non-profits, and for-profits. UNC Gillings School of Public Health is also participating. The focus will be on four areas including Safe and Well Communities, Health and Well-Being, Affording Aging, and Family Caregivers with subcommittees under each area. When the plan is finished, the recommendations will be presented to the Governor and General Assembly.

Agency Updates:

The first session of a revised DSS orientation program was offered in January. Instead of inviting new employees to orientation twice annually for an almost full-day program, the program will be divided into 3-4 sessions offered monthly in 60-90 minute sessions. The goal is to offer more frequently and to make the information less overwhelming by having shorter sessions.

With no further items to discuss there was a motion to enter a closed session to discuss a personnel issue from Cecil Wilson with a second motion from Peter Varney with all in favor.

Cecil Wilson motioned to exit closed session with a second motion from Memory Dossenbach with all in favor.

With no further items to discuss Peter Varney motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second motion from Cecil Wilson with all in favor.

The next meeting will be held February 21, 2024 in the ground conference room of CCDSS at 4:00.

Chair

Date

Secretary

Date