
WORK FIRST
Cash Assistance Recertification Process and Procedures

Change # **01-2025**

April 01, 2025

201 – CASH ASSISTANCE RECERTIFICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

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I. RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Counties must ensure that families who continue to receive Work First Cash Assistance are eligible and receive the correct amount of benefits. Eligibility for ongoing cash benefits must be reviewed and recertified based on this policy section. Counties may establish their own schedules within the following minimum requirements for when a redetermination for eligibility must be conducted.

Work First recertifications must be processed within 60 calendar days prior to the last day of the current certification period. When the last day of the current certification period is a holiday or weekend, the recertification must be processed no later than the prior business day before the holiday or weekend for the current certification period. To comply with the mandated recertification performance measure, 95% of Work First recertifications must be processed within the specified **timeframe**. Recertifications are considered processed timely when the participant is interviewed, and the recertification process is completed in NC FAST within 60 calendar days prior to the end of the current certification period.

- A. At a minimum, case managers must conduct a face-to-face interview **either in person or through a virtual platform which includes video capability and allows the worker to have a face-to-face conversation with the participant.** (This can include but is not limited to Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Face Time, etc.) The case manager's documentation should clearly outline the platform being used. The case manager must complete the recertification **in NC FAST** based on the **policies below**:
1. For Work First Benefit cases a recertification is required once every 12 months.
 2. For child-only cases, within 6 months of the date of application and once every 12 months after the initial 6-month recertification.

The recertification Appointment Notice (DSS-8189) must be sent to the participant within 30 to 60 days before the last day of the current certification period. **For example, if the end of the certification period is June 30, the DSS-8189 can be sent as early as April 30 but no later than May 31. With an initial appointment set, the case manager must specify on the DSS-8189 form if the appointment will be held in person or conducted through a virtual platform.**

The recertification must be completed by the case manager and the participant before the last workday of the current certification month unless good cause exists and is documented. Failure to complete the recertification before the last workday of the current certification month by the participant without good cause, makes the entire family ineligible for a Work First Cash Assistance benefit for one month or until compliance, whichever is later. For more information regarding the ineligibility or sanction period, see Section III below.

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The family may re-apply for Work First during the month of ineligibility, but eligibility can begin no earlier than the first of the month following the month of ineligibility. The month of ineligibility is considered the month following the current certification period. **For example, if the certification period ends April 30th, the month of ineligibility would be the month of May and the household would not be eligible for benefits until the month of June.** A face-to-face interview must be conducted, and eligibility **recertified** at a minimum of every 12 months.

If the participant reapplies after the month of ineligibility, the case is considered a reapplication. See Work First Manual Section 104 for Application Process and Procedures.

The case manager must provide or arrange for appropriate accommodations for families with limited English proficiency or with disabilities to ensure recertifications are conducted as scheduled.

- B. A Work First Cash Assistance recertification requires the case manager to complete all of the following actions and required assessments and document completion within the case record:
1. Notify the family of the recertification appointment using the Appointment Notice (DSS-8189) as directed in the Cash Assistance Recertification Job Aid.
 2. Provide the case head/payee with the **Notice of Information Needed to Determine Your Eligibility for Work First Family Assistance (DSS-8146A)** for any pending information.
 3. Have the case head/payee sign, a Core Requirements MRA (DSS-6963A). In a **2-Parent case, both adults** must sign an MRA-A Core Requirements. See Work First Manual Section 103.
 4. Verify and document all immunizations/medical checkups are current as **outlined in WF Policy 103**. The case head/payee is responsible for providing documentation at each recertification that the children in their care, who receive assistance, are receiving the required immunizations and health screenings. Case managers must provide assistance as requested in obtaining this information.
 5. Verify and document children's school attendance and progress. The participant's statement can be used unless questionable. See Work First Manual Section 103.
 6. As applicable, complete a substance use screening at each recertification. The case manager must complete the Audit/DAST-10 screening tool and document within NC FAST. **This assessment must be keyed into NC FAST. Reference the Completing Work First Assessment Job Aid** If any required case head refuses or fails to complete the screening, document the case record. The case head will be

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- ineligible to receive Work First. Continue with the eligibility determination process for the remaining household members. **All forms must be uploaded to the income support.** See Work First Manual Section 104B.
7. Using the Notification of the Family Violence Option (DSS-6966), inform the participant of the definition of family violence and the right to request a waiver. If the participant refuses to sign the notification, note on the form the refusal to sign. Give a copy to the participant and file the original in the case record. **The assessment must be completed in NC FAST.** There is no penalty for failure to sign. See Work First Manual Section 104D.
 8. **Case Managers must offer the Learning Needs Screening (DSS-5327) and complete the Consent/Waiver (DSS-5330). The Learning Needs Screening Tool should be completed based on the participants choice as indicated on the DSS – 5330. The screening must be keyed into NC FAST the associated forms must be signed and uploaded into NCFAST on the Income Support.**
 9. Verify and inform the family of the number of months remaining in their state and federal (24 and 60 month) time limits **if applicable.** Inform them of their right to request an extension or a hardship exemption. See Work First Manual Section 105.
 10. Review the documentation of kinship in the case record and verify the kinship. If the kinship requirement was met by legal custody or guardianship of the child(ren), obtain the adult's written statement at each recertification that the legal custody or guardianship status is still valid. **If at application, a written statement from a knowledgeable individual was accepted, at review the case manager must document that kinship was documented by court ordered legal custody, legal guardianship, or birth certificates.** See Work First Manual Section 112 for further detail and acceptable documentation.
 11. Review the family cap provision with every family at each recertification. See Work First Manual Section 106.
 12. Review the minor parent rules with families that include a minor parent and document the situation. See Work First Manual Section 107.
 13. Ensure that the social security number of **everyone** included on the case has been verified. Document the verification of each number for each family member who had to apply for a number or apply for a duplicate card at application. Unless the family member provides the number or applies for one, the family member cannot receive Work First Cash Assistance. See Work First Manual Section 110.

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14. Review the citizenship and identity documents in the case record. Obtain documentation for citizenship and identity if the case record does not contain documentation. Document the family's statement as to whether there have been any changes in immigrant status for family members. See Work First Manual Section 111
15. Verify that the child(ren) is (are) living with the case head/payee through collateral contacts or by making a home visit where it is evident that the child lives in the home. The **Verification of Household Composition form (DSS-6961) can be used to confirm collateral contacts. However, other methods, such as directly contacting the collateral source, may also serve as effective means of verification.** See Work First Manual Section 112.
16. Verify Income. See Work First Manual Section 114.
17. Verify Resources. See Work First Manual Section 115.
18. Explain the Recipient's Rights and Responsibilities (NCFAST-20009). The case manager and the participant must sign the NCFAST-20009.
19. Complete **and fully review results of** the following online matches via OVS:
 - **ACTS**
 - **ESC**
 - **BENDEX**
 - **SDX**
 - **DOC**Refer to FAST Help Cash Assistance Recertification Job Aid for guidance.
20. Key the recertification as directed in the Cash Assistance Recertification Job Aid. The case manager must enter the date of the interview in the "Date Received" field and "in-Person" in the "Method" field. The case manager will then manage the Evidence Dashboard to determine eligibility for ongoing assistance.

Note: Case managers must upload all recertification documents into NC FAST on the Income Support.

II. PENALTY FOR A FAMILY THAT DOES NOT COMPLETE THE RECERTIFICATION

Families who fail to appear for the face-to-face recertification interview or otherwise allow case managers to complete the periodic eligibility recertification without good cause (a significant family crisis or change, illness or disability of the caretaker or child; or civil leave, including jury duty, or a required court appearance), are ineligible for Work First Cash Assistance for one month

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and/or until compliance. The case manager must key a sanction and terminate the case. The family may reapply at any time. However, the case manager cannot approve the application with a benefit effective date earlier than the month after the month of ineligibility. Refer to the FAST Help Creating a Sanction Job Aid for guidance. **See Work First Manual Section 120.**

III. VERIFYING AND DOCUMENTING THE FAMILY'S ELIGIBILITY

The DSS-8228 must be used at the Work First Cash Assistance recertification and signature obtained by the case manager and the participant. **Telephonic signatures are acceptable if completing the recertification by a virtual platform.** Upon completion of the recertification interview, the case manager must review all program forms and documents provided for verification to ensure they comply with Work First program and policy requirements. The DSS-8228 is a necessary tool to ensure all eligibility requirements are met and documented as outlined in WF 201 I B.