

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 4-2020
EFS_EA_AL-4-2020**

Crisis Intervention and Low Income Energy Assistance Program

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Energy Program Administrators, Managers and Supervisors

DATE: August 25, 2020

SUBJECT: Telephonic Signature

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon receipt

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

North Carolina continues to find ways to streamline policy and procedures to help serve as many households as possible in the most efficient ways. Since applicants have the ability to apply for CIP and LIEAP by phone, telephonic signatures will be a helpful addition to the telephone interview process. This will allow more clients to apply via telephone and reduce the processing time by eliminating the signature requirement for applications.

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance on the use of telephonic signatures for CIP and LIEAP applications.

II. WHAT IS A TELEPHONIC SIGNATURE?

A telephonic signature is a type of electronic signature that uses an individual's verbal attestation in place of an ink signature.

III. WHAT ACTIONS ARE REQUIRED BY THE WORKER?

When applicants submit an Energy application by mail, fax or in person without a signature, workers must take the following actions.

- a) If the worker has successfully contacted the applicant by telephone:
- Review the DSS-8178, Energy Program Application with the applicant
 - Summarize the information to which the applicant agrees. Document on the signature line, the applicant's name, date, and time of the telephone call. The completed DSS-8178 will serve as the summary of the information and client's responses indicating agreement or disagreement.
 - Document "Telephone Signature" in the Income Support Application → Case Details → Notes.
- b) If worker cannot contact client by telephone take the following actions.

- Mail the DSS-8178 to the client for signature and follow normal CIP or LIEAP policy.
- If client subsequently calls the worker, follow instructions above.

If applicant calls the agency and wishes to complete an application for Energy, the worker must take the following actions:

Offer to complete the application at the time of the call or schedule an appointment within 1 day of the call to complete the interview by phone.

- a) Complete the NC FAST guided interview or DSS-8178 over the phone.
 - NC FAST guided interview: Document in the Income Support Application case notes the name, date, and time of application. The information and the client's responses indicating agreement or disagreement.
 - DSS-8178: Document on the signature line of the DSS-8178 the client's name, date, and time of application. The completed DSS-8178 will serve as the summary of the information and client's responses indicating agreement or disagreement.
 - Document "Telephone Signature" in the Income Support Application → Case Details → Notes.
- b) If the worker cannot complete the interview or the worker is unable to contact the client to complete the telephone interview, mail the client a DSS-8178 and follow normal CIP or LIEAP policy. If client subsequently calls the worker follow instruction above.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

These changes are effective upon receipt with all CIP and LIEAP applications taken on or after August 25, 2020. Submit any questions regarding this policy to Operational Support Team (OST) at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services

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