

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 7-2020
EFS_WF_AL-7-2020**

Work First Program

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Work First Program Administrators,
Managers and Supervisors

DATE: April 17, 2020

SUBJECT: Temporary Suspension of Work First Cash Assistance
Terminations

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon Receipt

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Terminations of Work First (WF) Cash Assistance (CA) cases are temporarily suspended through the end of the month following the month in which the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services is lifted. This includes terminations effective March 31, 2020 and forward. Work First terminations should not be entered into the North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) system.

II. POLICY PROCEDURES

- NC FAST will produce and post a report in FAST Help identifying cash assistance cases terminated effective March 31, 2020 and later due to the following reasons:

Time Clock Limit Reached:

24-Month State clock limit reached
60-Month State clock limit reached
60-Month Federal clock limit reached

Paperwork or Procedural Terminations:

Client failed to sign the Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA)
Client did not request Cash Assistance for all mandatory individuals
Failed to apply for other required benefits
Failed to provide proof of citizenship/identity

- NC FAST will issue a communication notifying counties when the reports are available in Fast Help.
- Harship extension requests and hearings are not required during the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration.
- Cases terminated due to exhausted time clocks will require the case manager to reopen the case and add extension evidence, if the family meets all other

eligibility requirements. For assistance refer to the Job Aid: Entering Work First Time Limit Extension Evidence.

- Cases terminated due to paperwork or procedural requirements will require the case manager to reopen the case if the family meets all other eligibility requirements. For assistance refer to the Job Aid: Completing Manual Reactivations.
- Case managers must send a DSS-5290-B to inform recipients their case has been reactivated. This notice must be sent for reactivations of cases that terminated due to time clock limits and paperwork or procedural requirements.
- Once the COVID-19 emergency declaration is lifted, case managers must:
 - reinstate paperwork or procedural terminations suspended due to the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, and
 - send a DSS-8110 Timely Notice to inform households their case will terminate.
- NC FAST will terminate cases closed due to exhaustion of the time clock and automatically send a notice of termination, once the COVID-19 emergency declaration is lifted.
- Extension months used during COVID-19 will not count towards hardship extensions granted through a hardship hearing conducted after the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted.
- Terminations not imposed for new applications must be imposed and entered into NC FAST by county staff once the COVID-19 health emergency declaration is lifted.

III. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Counties will keep track of Work First Benefit cases effected by the temporary suspension of paperwork or procedural terminations. The end of the month following the month in which the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services is lifted, the WF case must be terminated in NC FAST. Failure to close cases required to terminate will result in issuance of an overpayment.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective upon receipt. All provisions implemented will be allowed until the end of the month following the month in which the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services is lifted. Submit any questions regarding this policy to the Operational Support Team (OST) at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services

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