



CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

DATE: October 18, 2017
MANUAL: WORK FIRST MANUAL
CHANGE NO.: 3-2017
TO: County Directors of Social Services
EFFECTIVE: November 1, 2017

I. BACKGROUND

This Change Notice provides notification of revision to Work First Manual Section 118, Work Requirements and Services. The revision includes substantive changes to the provision of employment services, removes references to legacy systems and Medicaid Assistance and adds NC FAST terminology. Throughout the manual section, the term county department of social services was changed to county social services/human services agency. The revision includes the repositioning of content, minor language adjustments and other grammatical changes.

II. SPECIFIC CHANGES

A. Section I, Introduction

1. Update to language relating to federal laws and general service provision.
2. Each family participating in Employment Services must have an Outcome Plan and a signed Mutual Responsibility Agreement-Plan of Action (DSS-6963-B).

B. Section II, Work First Program Performance Measures

Provides an overview of federal performance measures for the state and local Work First Programs.

C. Section III, Work Registration Requirements

1. Employment Security Commission updated to the Division of Workforce Solutions/ NC Works.
2. NC Job Connector procedures replaced with NC Works registration procedures.
3. In a two-parent family, each parent assessed as ready to engage in job search must register with NC Works.
4. The Work First participant must provide verification of their NC Works registration status.

D. Section IV, Work-Eligible Individuals

1. WF 118. IV.A, The State 24-month time Limit

Participants enrolled in post-secondary education will have months removed from the 24-month clock after the participant meets the waiver criteria.

2. WF 118. IV.B, Individuals with Disabilities
 - a. Use the DSS-8655 to request medical documentation of a disability/incapacity.
 - b. The SSDI or VA Award Letter is allowable documentation of a disability, when the participant is the primary beneficiary.
 - c. Prior to the receipt of medical documentation, develop an Outcome Plan and MRA-B based on the participant's statement of their work capacity.
 - d. Obtain a signed Consent for Release of Information, DSS-6969, from the participant to contact the medical provider for clarification of or update to the DSS-8655.
 - e. After review of the DSS-8655, the caseworker and participant will revise the Outcome Plan to reflect the verified information.
 - f. Adjustments to the State 24- month clock occurs after the benefit issuance.
 - g. The months on the 24- month clock must be evaluated for cases with 12,18, and 22 months and when completing a review.
 - h. The 24-month time clock can also be adjusted when there is a verified disability (SSDI or VA Disability Award Letter) to accommodate the participant.
3. WF 118. IV.D, Failure to Participate in Required Activities
 - a. Participant failure to provide prior notification of circumstances impacting program compliance may result in case termination.
 - b. Revision to Good Cause.
 - c. Document Good Cause in the case narrative.
 - d. For two-parent families, the evaluation for good cause must include both parents.
 - e. Releasing a WFB payment when a family fails to meet program requirements, even with good cause, has a negative impact on the Work Participation Rate.
 - f. Provide ongoing case management services to employed families.

E. Section V, NC FAST Outcome Management

1. WF 118. V.A, The Outcome Plan
 - a. The Outcome Plan and the MRA-B must be completed within 5 workdays of the application for Work First cash assistance.
 - b. Revision to the Outcome Plan may occur at any time; including when there is lack of progress in an assigned activity.
 - c. Periodic updates, no less frequently than every 12 weeks, are required of medical documentation to evaluate for changes to work capacity.
2. WF 118. V.B, The Mutual Responsibility Agreement- Plan of Action (MRA-B)
 - a. The MRA-B includes all activities from the Outcome Plan and other information related to program compliance and eligibility.
 - b. Print an MRA -B when the Outcome Plan is created or revised by the caseworker. The MRA-B must be signed by the caseworker and participant(s).
 - c. If both parents in a two-parent family are participating in employment services, include both on a single Outcome Plan.

F. Section VI, Federal Work Activities

1. Enter participation hours on the Outcome Plan in NC FAST.
2. Participation in non-core activities only count after the completion of the required hours in core activities.
3. New chart to replace the Work Activity Chart. The chart lists the required hours of participation based on family type.
4. Listing of the core and non-core work activities.
5. Job Search/Job Readiness hours which exceed the federal limits, may be keyed as custom activities in NC FAST.
6. The Job Search/Verification Log, DSS 6960, must be used for job search activities.
7. The caseworker must complete the FLSA calculation each month and document in the case narrative.
8. Modify the FLSA Calculation Record in NC FAST when it doesn't accurately reflect the required monthly hours.
9. The "deeming of hours" is a system calculation that occurs after the caseworker enters the actual Work Experience/Community Service hours in the Participation Folder for the month.

G. Section VII, Custom Activities

1. Custom activities do not count toward the Work Participation Rate.
2. Document participation by attendance reports signed by the participant or reports from the provider(s) of the activity.

H. Section VIII, Participation Rates

1. The participation rates for individual counties are calculated monthly using data from the NC FAST Outcome Plans.
2. Clarified and defined the use of excused and federally excused absences.
3. Excused absences may be used for the death of an immediate family member.
4. The two separate actions of entering Job Readiness and Job Search participation hours in NC FAST must equal the documented hours on the logs or time sheets.

III. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

This policy is effective November 1, 2017. Apply this policy to applications, reviews and changes in situation initiated on or after November 1, 2017.

Please email any questions regarding this policy to the DHHS Operational Support Team (OST) via [IEM Policy Questions](#).

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services
Division of Social Services

DL/sdm

Attachment:
[WF 118](#)