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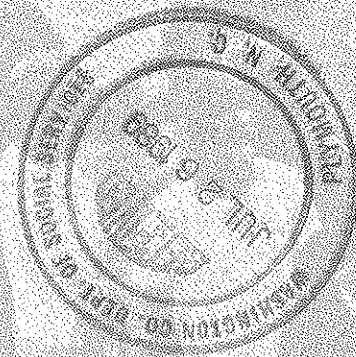
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The North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS) is a voluntary association composed of directors of social services at the county level in North Carolina. Affiliated with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, NCACDSS has constantly worked on significant social issues during its long history. The association is dedicated to maintaining a responsive social services system in North Carolina.

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1940's

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1960's

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1970's

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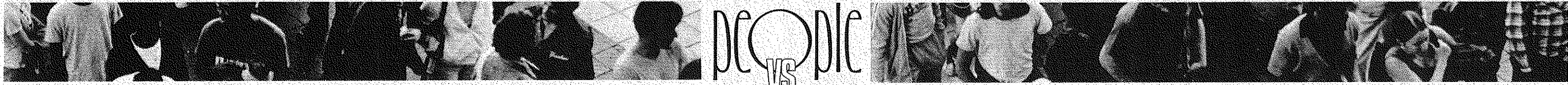
1980's

The number of forms required for an AFDC application has risen from three when the program first began to over 35 today.

PEOPLE VS PAPER

*A reaffirmation of purpose:
 people instead of forms,
 regulations, and paperwork.*

Sponsored by the
 North Carolina
 Association of
 County Directors
 of Social Services



PEOPLE VS PAPER

LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORS PLEDGE: SIMPLIFICATION OF THE WELFARE SYSTEM WILL BEGIN AT HOME

By examining our values, we will...

- begin to study the impact of our complex public welfare system on citizens and our staff.
- encourage the participation of citizens and all staff in the development of strategies for simplifying the welfare system.
- make a concentrated effort to assure that the attitudes of all staff help support the self-esteem, worth, and dignity of all the people we serve, and emphasize actions that maximize the potential of individuals and families.

By emphasizing efficiency, we will...

- study our own work processes and how they create more, or less, efficiency, and eliminate the waste that is exposed.
- share with other Directors effective models of implementing complex policies.
- eliminate all unnecessary forms.
- push for the expansion of the use of self-declaration by citizens as a means of verifying information on applications for assistance.

By increasing outreach, we will...

- reach out more to other community organizations and advocacy groups, such as Legal Services, to coordinate the multi-faceted service delivery programs in each locality.
- begin to aggressively inform citizens about our services.

Through advocacy, we will...

- seek to educate the public so that they may become advocates for a simpler welfare system.
- work towards identifying and eliminating barriers to quality communication with state and federal policy-makers and to use that communication to advocate for a simpler welfare system.

Through evaluation, we will...

- establish rigorous analysis of the effectiveness of our programs and change procedures and policies when such action is indicated.
- be open to and solicit feedback from citizens and other agencies about our services.

We are all drowning... in the sea of red tape which emanates from our complex, excessively bureaucratic public welfare system. All across North Carolina, ordinary citizens like you and your family, not to mention social services employees, are faced with a daily battle against this increasing tide of rules, regulations and paperwork. Something has got to be done.

The North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services wants to let you, the public, know that we are very concerned about this problem.

In March of 1989, a conference evaluated North Carolina's public welfare bureaucracy. We heard from experts and learned a great deal. As a result, we are determined to cause the welfare system to be simplified.

Please consider some of the facts about the tremendous extent of the problem — and how this is affecting both citizens in need and your tax dollars.

1. Citizens of North Carolina who need assistance may have trouble getting it because of the complex rules of the system.

- Of all the poor children in our state, only 30% receive AFDC, 38% receive Medicaid and 48% receive Food Stamps.
- 60% of public assistance applicants who are denied benefits have difficulty with the application process.
 - National studies now show a 75% increase in denials for procedural reasons since 1980.
- The number of forms required for an AFDC application has risen from 3 to 35 since the inception of the program.
- In a recent study, welfare recipients cited reductions in the bureaucracy as the second most needed change in the welfare system.
- Welfare recipients state that the AFDC and Food Stamp programs have the worst bureaucratic procedures.

2. Administrative costs, particularly at the local level, are rising higher and higher.

- Because of the complexity of the AFDC and Food Stamp programs, workers are able to handle fewer and fewer cases, thus forcing local governments to hire additional staff.
- Since 1982, administrative costs for North Carolina's Food Stamp program have risen 65%, while benefits have dropped 17%.
- Recent studies by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities show that monthly reporting in the Food Stamp program, an optional procedure still used in North Carolina, causes a net 6% increase in administrative costs.

As you can see, we face a serious set of issues. I ask that you join with us to advocate for positive change. North Carolina's citizens, whether in need of help or as taxpayers, deserve a more equitable and efficient public welfare system.

I thank you for your concern and welcome your thoughts at any time.

Bobby K. Boyd
Bobby K. Boyd
President

STATE OFFICIALS SHOULD BECOME THE PRIME FIGHTERS IN THE BATTLE FOR SIMPLIFICATION

With leadership, state officials can...

- establish a clearly defined mission with respect to simplification of the public welfare system.
- help build a work culture that is conducive to creativity, innovation, flexibility, and quality communication.
- promote the elimination of barriers to eligible citizens by challenging local agencies to emphasize eligibility instead of ineligibility.
- view simplification as one way to make our public welfare system more accessible to the people of North Carolina.

With improved planning, state officials can...

- carefully study the impact of laws and regulations on productivity and service delivery.
- begin to measure the success of programs based on the actual improvement in family functioning and not merely on administrative outcomes, such as error rates.
- take a lead role in spreading innovative ideas among localities to improve our service and increase efficiency.

Programmatically, state officials can...

- pursue program consolidation throughout the welfare system, using the mandates of the 1988 Federal Welfare Reform legislation fully, as a means of promoting more efficient services and more consistent regulations.
- develop a single application for income-restricted programs with generic criteria for eligibility, not to be lower than 100% of the poverty level.
- eliminate unnecessary and costly paperwork such as monthly reporting forms for AFDC and Food Stamps.

As a first step in this direction, we call on the state to:

- establish a state commission on simplification of the public welfare system.
- adopt the Basic Social Services Plan, as a way to provide more coherence and equity in North Carolina's social services system.

Finally, we call on state officials to aggressively advocate for welfare simplification with federal officials, who must be equally involved in solving this problem.