ECONOMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

December 13, 2023

Co-Chairs: Trish Baker, Davidson County, Angi Karchmer, Gaston County, Willie Smith, Gates County, Brenda Brown, Hertford County

**FNS** - Jerquitta Hicks, Cynthia Ervin

* 2024 COLA

Changes are effective as of 10/1. May see some additional adjustments for SSI population in January.

* FNS/SNAP system enhancements

Online features now available (eNotices, text messages, online recerts, change of circumstances). FNS online COC is getting ready to launch. SNAP COC is already available. Encourage linking to utilize these new features. Seeing an uptick in online recerts. Remote Identity proofing is coming soon.

* ABAWD website

Launched to help beneficiaries to understand ABAWD and upper age changes.

* Card Skimming

Constantly looking for ways to improve business, created card skimming webpage with FAQ for beneficiary.

* PEBT ending permanently.
* Summer EBT

New permanent summer EBT in 2024, new program. Additional guidance is coming. Will implement at state level with DPI.

* Non-Merit Staff – developed a survey for early next year to gauge interest in using non-merit to perform activities. There will be reporting requirements to USDA (quarterly and annually). Will not be able to do interviews or establish eligibility. Survey will explain tasks that a non-merit staff could do.
* Q & A

Question about Dashboard/Workloads – created three dashboards (pending caseloads, completed caseload and analysis). Piloting this with several counties.

Out of SNAP ARPA funds. NC Fast is always looking to expand and more enhancements could be coming.

**DHB**  - Eva Fulcher/Gina Hamilton

* 8110’s

Critical that workers generate 8110 in NC Fast. If there is an issue with reason and outcome on notice and cannot get correct – need to report this. Guidance is coming on how to report this. If it’s a system issue want NC Fast to fix it. A proper 8110 is critical, federal requirement to notify of outcome and policy citation and effective dates. 8110’s must be correct. All audits including Franklin v Kinsley to update language on 8110 reasons and outcomes. Two odd scenarios found and submitted a change request to NCF, will notify counties. Do not know why caseworkers are going outside NC Fast to issue 8110’s.

Will push out communication shortly on what to do when caseworker states 8110 cannot be generated. Do not generate from internal document system, generate in NC Fast. Let OST know immediate if cannot generate – need case number and issue so they can resolve it.

If “notice sent out of NC Fast” shows, it’s because the caseworker selected that reason. Eva stated a data issue was found so in general there should be a reduction in this showing on future Termination/Reduction reports.

* Medicaid Outreach Ad Campaign

Beginning January, DHHS will begin a paid media campaign for digital and traditional media for Medicaid expansion. Will occur 1/15/24 to 12/31/2024. No phone numbers identified but call to action to visit Medicaid.gov. Will increase applications, foot traffic and phone calls. Proactive communications continue to go out along the life cycle of renewals. Will reduce churn. Reminders will go out about reporting changes via texts, emails and robo calls.

CMS will sent out letters to public. DSS could get calls.

* Q & A

Critical Age – still work and react, Eva is exploring a way to automate those changes with NC Fast. Continuous eligibility applies for children under 19.

 Individuals over 19 under 100% FPL – this would be in the January release beginning in February.

 Would pick up May cases first, then January – April. More information will be coming.

 Looking at AVS and E14 Waiver for ABD/PLA – for now, continue to work. Guidance will be coming.

 Long term care will not be included in any extension.

**12-month extensions** for children under 19 for ending 12/31, 1/31 and 2/29. Completed those batches. Some did not pick up if in progress, submitted, or potential ineligibility. For NC Fast to push out remaining cases, will do a different batch process. Will go into this weekend release. Do not terminate or reduce if ineligible, do not work or touch those cases. Do not process any more MIC cases. Leave alone – will push them out. All remaining cases should be completed next week. Children are covered under 12-month E14 waiver. Originally advised counties that Foster Care/Adoption would not be included but there are no exceptions in the waiver. Foster Care and Adoption will be included. Social workers will still follow procedures for verifying IV-E funding, but 12 months continuous eligibility applies. It could be that if IV-E funding stops, may need to move children into MIC case. Waiver covers children with certs ending 12/31 and ongoing, If 11/30 termination that would stand if another timely notice is issued. Came back and clarified – if cert was then showing 12/31, would be pulled in and extended.

**DCDEE** - Elizabeth Everette

* IEM is no longer available. SCCA was the last program using it. Now that all income policy is in the online manual it is no longer available.
* Expenditures: October 88.55% combined coefficient. For November, waiting on info. Anticipate an increase in spending. Market rate increases are in effect. Spending guidance – work waiting lists and do not create a waiting list. DCDEE is monitoring the spending.

**Energy –** Allison Smith

Auto LIHEAP have been cloned. Counties can begin writing checks for non-deposit vendors on 1/21. Counties should keep track of LIEAP fund balances. When apps are cloned for Auto-LHIEAP, does not remove money from fund balance until processed. Keep a check until the 20th. Energy policy updates eff 12/1 for LIEAP and CIP.

Next Mtg – January 10, 2024

Happy New Year!