

**County Budget Estimates**  
**For the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year**

**Prepared in Accordance with**

**G.S. 108A-88**



**Prepared by**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

**Division of Social Services**  
**Budget Office**

**February 13, 2026**

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## **OVERVIEW:**

The information below highlights specific service areas where changes are underway that may impact local budgets. Information from previous budget estimates is also included in some service areas for ongoing awareness. While in some cases no specific budget amounts can be attached to these items, it is important to share the following information to provide some contextual information that would be helpful for counties to consider. The narrative itself provides fuller detail on services and funding availability anticipated. New programs include:

### **I. WORKSTATION SECURITY AND IT SECURITY ASSESSMENT**

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires offices with access to Federal Tax Information (FTI) be inspected to ensure federal tax information is protected. The IRS Publication 1075, Tax Information Security Guidelines for Federal, State and Local Agencies notes: "The agency must scan for vulnerabilities in the information system and hosted applications at a minimum of monthly for all systems and when new vulnerabilities potentially affecting the system/applications are identified and reported" (Section 9.3.14.3(a)). To comply with this regulation, counties who do not already have the proper software to run the required vulnerability scans will need to purchase the appropriate software outlined within the IRS Publication 1075. Link to IRS publication 1075: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1075.pdf>

The link listed below provides information regarding workstation vulnerability scans and the Nessus tool used by the IRS. This link is a valuable resource for your IT teams to review: <https://www.irs.gov/privacy-disclosure/safeguards-program>

Please be aware that this requirement applies to all programs, workstations, and systems with access to FTI, not only Child Support.

Additionally, to address cybersecurity risks, protect Medicaid beneficiary information, and minimize the potential for disruptions to E&E program operations, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) Privacy and Security Office (PSO) will be conducting a forthcoming comprehensive IT security assessment that includes penetration testing, vulnerability analyses, and remediation guidance across your organization with a focus on maintaining the highest standards of protection.

All Counties were sent a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NCDHHS and the County Department of Social Services/Human Services Agency. The MOA establishes the agreement between the two entities regarding the County's access to, and use and disclosure of, all confidential data and information provided by NCDHHS to the County, for purposes of administering North Carolina's public assistance and public service programs.

### **II. ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES**

#### **The Work Number**

Management of this contract has been moved from the Division of Social Services to the Division of Health Benefits (DHB). A new annual contract was executed by DHB, with the

current contract expiring December 31, 2026. We anticipate a similar arrangement for subsequent years. County costs for this service are generated by county worker usage. Usage above set transaction ceilings generates overage fees as does additional hits due to new employers added to The Work Number database. The current contract operates under a monthly fixed fee format, at \$2,492,340 per month for a block of 4,250,000 transactions, annualized at \$29,908,083. Medicaid costs are covered at 100% by a combination of federal and state funding. Counties are responsible for the nonfederal share for other economic services programs and will be invoiced by DHB. Hits above that ceiling would result in triggering an Overage Block, at additional costs. NC FAST integrated with The Work Number in 2020. This has allowed NC FAST to block both systematic and manual second billable calls, reducing the number of billable transactions.

With the implementation of twice annual redeterminations for the Medicaid expansion population beginning in January 2027, DHB is evaluating the ongoing cost impacts on The Work Number utilization.

### **III. CHILD WELFARE**

#### **Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) of 2018**

Two major goals of FFPSA are to safely prevent children from entering foster care and to create financial incentives to place children in the custody of the department of social services in family-like settings such as kinship care and family foster homes. FFPSA enables the use of federal Title IV-E funds to provide enhanced support to children and families to prevent entry into foster care by providing evidence-based programs (EBPs) that are approved by the federal government and identified in the state's federally approved [Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan](#). It incentivizes family-based placements by imposing a 14-day limit on reimbursement of group placements.

**Evidence-Based Prevention Services for Candidates for Foster Care:** EBPs must be listed as Well Supported, Supported, or Promising on the federal clearing house and be included in a state's approved Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan. The federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has approved North Carolina's Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan. NCDSS has implemented the Homebuilders service statewide, and it is available to all 100 counties. Work is also proceeding on strategies for meeting the stringent requirements for evaluation and continuous quality improvement for Title IV-E Prevention (FFPSA) services. Protocols have been implemented for determining eligibility for Title IV-E Prevention (FFPSA) services and for making referrals to prevention service providers during CPS In-Home Services. In SFY 26-27, protocols for determining eligibility for Title IV-E Prevention (FFPSA) services during and making referrals to prevention services providers during CPS Assessment will be explored.

**Administrative Cost Reimbursement for Candidates for Foster Care:** Changes were made in SFY 2024 into SFY 2025 that enabled counties to increase IV-E reimbursement for case management costs for candidates for foster care. The increased IV-E reimbursement rate is now available to candidates for foster care receiving in-home services and who are receiving Homebuilders services. Because all **candidates for foster care** receiving an EBP service under

the state's approved Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan are IV-E eligible under FFPSA, the IV-E penetration rate will not be applied to administrative claims for these children.

**14-day limit for reimbursement for most congregate care placements made after October 1, 2021:** The 14-day limit applies to all group placements currently available in North Carolina made after October 1, 2021, with two exceptions: participants in adolescent parenting programs, and young adults in Foster Care 18-21. The limit does not apply to children in congregate care placements as of September 30, 2021, provided they do not change placements.

### **Administrative Cost Reimbursement for Pre-Service Training (255)**

In SFY 2024, North Carolina revised its Child Welfare Training Plan to align with federal guidance regarding allowable Title IV-E administrative training expenditures. As part of this update, the State conducted a comprehensive review of pre-service training components and determined that specific elements meet the criteria for Title IV-E reimbursement. Counties received \$3,531,492.17 in Title IV-E reimbursement in SFY25 for worker time associated with pre-service training.

To support accurate claiming, the Pre-Service Daysheet claiming code (255) was established, and in SFY25 enhancements were made to NCCORELS to streamline claiming. This code authorizes counties to claim eligible administrative costs associated with pre-service training activities. Under this policy, all worker time spent participating in approved pre-service training is reimbursable at an approved percentage, part of which is allocated to enhanced 75% match rate. This change ensures consistent application of federal cost allocation requirements and strengthens the State's capacity to support a well-prepared child welfare workforce.

### **Congregate Care Bridge Funding**

There is no bridge funding currently allocated for SFY 2026-27 for congregate care placements not otherwise covered by Title IV-E funding. NCDHHS is assessing potential options, but cannot confirm whether there will be any funding available at this time. NCDHHS will immediately share any updates regarding possible additional funding with counties as they become available.

### **Kinship Care Reimbursement**

The General Assembly during the 2023 legislative session in accordance with Senate Bill 20 established a reimbursement fund for unlicensed kinship care providers. The purpose of the fund is to support those kinship care providers related by blood, marriage, or adoption providing foster care as defined under G.S. 131D-10.2(9). The maximum rates for State participation in reimbursement for unlicensed kinship foster care are established on a graduated scale and based on half of the standard foster care board rate identified in the Foster Care Funding Manual. Counties provide 50% of the cost of the incentive; the state provides the other 50%. The entire amount of the payment is paid to the kinship care provider by the county and the county charges the State for its share of the cost.

An update to SB20 through Session Law 2024-34, Senate Bill 425, became effective on July 8, 2024. Eligibility criteria was expanded to include "any half siblings of the child(ren) regardless of their relationship to the kinship care provider."

### **Emergency Placement Fund**

The DSS Emergency Placement Fund is one initiative within the \$80 million allocated to directly support child and family well-being with specialty treatment programs and intensive supports for children with complex behavioral health needs. These funds are being provided to assist county departments of social services in preventing children from staying in the DSS office while awaiting an appropriate Medicaid leveled treatment placement.

Funds can be spent on the following strategies:

- Maintaining experienced foster families on retainer to provide temporary emergency placement until a treatment placement can be located.
- Providing short-term rate increases to placement providers who can meet the needs of children who require an exceptional level of supervision.
- Implementing individual local solutions (approved on a case-by-case basis) that prevent a child in DSS custody from spending a night in the DSS offices.

### **FMAP**

The FMAP rate is used to determine the federal share for Title IV-E funding for foster care maintenance, adoption assistance, and guardianship assistance. The regular FMAP is 65.06%, and any changes in October 2026 are expected to be minimal.

### **Genetic Testing**

Child support program funds and related genetic-testing contracts cannot be used by child welfare agencies for the purpose of genetic testing. Child welfare services are responsible for ensuring that their budgets adequately account for any genetic testing required in the course of abuse, neglect, or dependency proceedings.

### **Child Welfare Information System**

Since October 2023, NCDHHS has been working with a competitively selected Prime Contractor Systems Integrator (PCSI), Deloitte, to bring the necessary technology and services to achieve a statewide child welfare information system. This system, now called PATH NC, provides decision support to county child welfare staff and improves oversight capabilities for local and State child welfare leaders. The system includes Intake and Assessment modules, along with Ongoing Case Management modules. Ongoing Case Management includes support for Family In-Home and FFPSA Prevention Services, Permanency Planning (Foster Care & Extended Foster Care), Foster Home Recruitment & Licensing, Foster Care Placements and Financials, IV-E Eligibility, Adoption, and Adoption Assistance. As of the start of calendar year 2026, 89 counties are using PATH NC for Child Protective Services Intake & Assessments. The remaining 11 counties will be the last group for Intake & Assessments and the first group for the Ongoing Case Management modules. It is planned for all 100 counties to use PATH NC for all of the aforementioned functions by the end of calendar year 2026. After PATH NC is deployed in a county, local child welfare technology that duplicates PATH NC's functions or results in inconsistent use of PATH NC will not be permitted and will no longer be eligible for Federal Financial Participation (FFP).

## **IV. CHILD SUPPORT**

### **IRS Background Investigation**

IRS Publication 1075 requires both local and federal criminal background checks for all employees and contractors who have access to Federal Tax Information (FTI). Beginning in SFY 2019–2020, child support programs were required to conduct criminal background checks on all existing and newly hired child support staff, and to repeat these checks every five years thereafter. The five-year renewal requirement began in SFY 2025–2026, meaning counties should now be conducting background checks for all new employees as well as any existing employees who have reached the five-year mark since their last check. Please refer to the “Child Support Services” narrative for additional details.

### **Genetic Testing**

To ensure compliance with 45 CFR 303.5(c), the State will maintain an umbrella contract with a paternity testing vendor as it has done in the past. Using the State contract, counties will benefit from the negotiated statewide rate. County offices may choose to have individual contracts to perform paternity testing for child support purposes. Please refer to the “Child Support Services” narrative for additional details.

### **Offset – IV-D Incentive**

Federal incentive dollars are based on the State’s performance in relation to other states in the federal performance measures and data reliability audits. County payments are based on fund availability and settled once the state receives the annual award letter from the federal Office of Child Support Services. Please refer to the “Offset – IV-D Incentive” narrative for additional details.

## **V. ADULT SERVICES**

### **Guardianship Services**

There are no anticipated programmatic changes for SFY 2026-2027. Counties will receive the same allocation as received in SFY 2025-2026. There is a required 25% county match. Counties may elect to use these funds for direct provision of guardianship services or for the provision of guardianship services through formal contracts with guardianship corporations. Adult Services will continue to manage the contracts with Corporations.

### **State-County Special Assistance**

Changes to State/County Special Assistance (SA):

- Session Law 2021-180 removed the cap on the number of slots for SA In Home as this is an entitlement program.
- Counties can no longer place clients on a waiting list for SA In Home Services.
- The standard monthly payment to individuals enrolled in the SA In Home program is one hundred percent (100%) of the monthly payment the individual would receive if the individual resided in an adult care home and qualified for Special Assistance.

Pursuant to Session Law 2022-74, Special Assistance rates will be adjusted each January 1 using the federally approved Social Security cost-of-living change (if any) effective for the applicable year. The federally approved Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2026 is 2.8%. As a result, effective January 1, 2026, the following new Special Assistance rates are applicable for determining financial eligibility for State-County Special Assistance programs:

- The monthly Basic Rate shall be \$1,397, and the SA Basic Maintenance Amount shall be \$1,467.
- The monthly Enhanced Rate (previously known as the Special Care Unit Rate) shall be \$1,792, and the SA Enhanced Maintenance Amount shall be \$1,862.

The monthly Enhanced Rate will be available for beneficiaries who receive Special Assistance, live in a Special Care Unit Facility, have a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s Disease or dementia, and have a valid FL-2. The rate will also be available for beneficiaries who receive Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH), have a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s Disease or dementia, and have a valid FL-2. This change will allow SAIH beneficiaries to become eligible for the higher Enhanced Rate.

The budget estimate is currently at the 2023-2024 level with the anticipated inclusion of the changes made in Session Law 2022-74, which changes the State-County Special Assistance recipient payments rate effective each January by the Social Security COLA percentage increase announced in the preceding October.

### **Adult Protective Services**

There are no anticipated programmatic changes for SFY 2026-2027. Funding estimates for 2026-2027 are based on continuation of the most recent authorized Social Services Block Grant allocation, which requires a 25% local match. Final funding levels are subject to legislative appropriation and may be adjusted upon enactment of the state budget.

### **State Adult Day Care Fund**

S.L. 2021-180 changed G.S. 143B-181.1 to require reimbursement rates for adult day services, adult day health services, and associated transportation services paid under the Home and Community Care Block Grant and the State Adult Day Care Fund to be established at the local level to reflect geographical differences, the availability of services, the cost to provide services, and other local variables. Note: S.L. 2023 changed G.S. 143B-153 to remove the Social Services Commission’s authority to set maximum rates for adult day care, adult day health and associated transportation services for State Adult Day Fund

The estimates remain at the 2023-2024 level. The State Adult Day Care Fund is made up of SSBG funds and state appropriation, and requires a 12.5% county match.

### **State In Home Fund**

There are no anticipated programmatic changes for SFY 2025-2026. Counties will receive the same SSBG allocation as received in SFY 2024-2025, requiring a 12.5% county match.

### **Adult Home Specialist Fund**

There are no anticipated programmatic changes for SFY 2025-2026. The estimates remain unchanged from 2024-2025. The federal Medicaid Administrative funds require a 50% nonfederal match which is evenly split between state and county funds.

## **VI. SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Estimates are based on county allocations as of January 1, 2025, minus any allocated Title IV-E (Foster Care) funding earned by the county. North Carolina Session Law 2021-180/Senate Bill 105 removed previous language that referenced allowing counties spending at least 92% of their previous year's allocation to be eligible to receive at least their ending allocation amount plus any additional available funds.

All carryforward funds, except for up to 2% of the available funds for preventing termination of services throughout the state fiscal year and repayment of any federal funds per Session Law 2023-134, Section 9D.4.(a)(2), will be available for allocation to all counties based on potentially eligible children per the American Community Survey and average cost for services by county in SFY 2024-25 based on their final expenses amounts.

## **VII. MEDICAID**

### **Continuous Coverage Unwinding**

On December 29, 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 177-328) was enacted. The legislation decoupled the continuous coverage requirement for Medicaid enrollment enacted by the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) from the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency, thus enabling states to terminate Medicaid enrollment of individuals who no longer meet Medicaid eligibility requirements on or after April 1, 2023.

Renewal data will be reported to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on a monthly basis and posted publicly, as required by law. Counties will need to staff appropriately to complete renewals.

### **Eligibility Audits of Timeliness and Accuracy**

Legislation requires county DSS agencies achieve minimum percentages of accurate determinations and to meet specified timeliness standards. Agencies that do not achieve required percentages will:

1. Need to implement corrective action plans.
2. May require additional investment of time by DSS local leadership, including directors and supervisors.
3. May require additional staff for compliance, including internal QC, monitoring or processing applications.

### **Medicaid Expansion**

Legislation enacted by the General Assembly provides funds for counties for Medicaid expansion. County funds expended on the nonfederal share of administrative costs related to Medicaid expansion are covered by hospital assessments appropriated by the General Assembly.

Expansion funds provided through this legislation will be allocated to the counties on a biannual basis.

Hospital assessments provided to the counties for Medicaid expansion can be used to secure resources to handle:

1. Increased calls with inquiries about qualifications.
2. Increased in-person/walk in contacts regarding who qualifies.
3. Increased number of applications/recertifications.
4. Staff training on eligibility policy and NC FAST updates.

### **Medicaid Managed Care**

The Children and Families Specialty Plan (CFSP), a statewide health plan for children in foster care, children receiving adoption assistance, young adults formerly in foster care, and their minor children, launched on December 1, 2025. Prior to launch, training was provided on CFSP to county Medicaid and child welfare staff to facilitate the transition and county readiness to implement CFSP will be assessed. County Departments of Social Services may experience an increase in calls and inquiries.

### **House Resolution 1 (HR1)**

Legislation enacted by the federal government will require changes to Medicaid eligibility and enrollment processes beginning in October 2026. Changes will include changes to “qualified alien” definitions, community engagement requirements for Medicaid expansion beneficiaries, and twice annual redeterminations for Medicaid expansion beneficiaries. DHB is working with the General Assembly to provide funds for counties to support the implementation of these eligibility changes. Counties should expect these changes to result in:

1. Increased calls with inquiries about qualifications.
2. Increased in-person/walk in contacts regarding who qualifies.
3. Increased number of applications/recertifications.
4. Staff training on eligibility policy and NC FAST updates.

### **IRS Background Investigation**

IRS Publication 1075 requires both local and federal criminal background checks for all employees and contractors who have access to Federal Tax Information (FTI). Implementation guidance for Medicaid will be issued by December 31, 2026.

## **VIII. FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES (FNS)**

### **H.R. 1 and Administrative Cost Share**

H.R. 1 (Public Law 119-21, One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025), signed July 4, 2025, creates two distinct and compounding fiscal liabilities for North Carolina's FNS (SNAP) program.

**Effective October 1, 2026, Section 10106 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21) reduces the federal administrative cost reimbursement rate for the Food and Nutrition Services program from 50 percent to 25 percent.** Counties will be reimbursed 25 percent for FNS administrative costs beginning October 1, 2026. This change applies to nine months of SFY 2026–2027 (October 2026 through June 2027) and will increase the county share of FNS administrative costs under current law and appropriations structure. Counties should plan their SFY 2027 budgets

accordingly to account for this reduction in federal reimbursement. Additionally, beginning in FFY 2028, Section 10105 of H.R. 1 establishes a new state matching requirement for FNS food benefit costs ranging from 0 to 15 percent based on the state's payment error rate, which may create additional fiscal obligations in future state fiscal years.

### **Sunset of Telephonic Signature Waiver**

North Carolina is currently operating under USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) telephonic signature waiver which allows FNS applicants and recipients to attest to the information provided on the application or recertification form without a physical signature. This waiver is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2026. Effective July 1, 2026, physical signatures will be required from applicants and recipients for all applications and recertifications. As a result, additional staff time and associated costs are anticipated for processing applications and recertifications. The Division of Child and Family Well-Being will submit a request to the USDA to extend the telephonic signature waiver extension 90 days prior to the expiration of the current waiver.

### **SUN Bucks Summer 2026**

Beginning in 2024, through public-private partnership, NCDHHS expanded its food assistance efforts by distributing \$131 million a year to more than 1 million children each year through Sun Bucks, USDA's newest permanent summer nutrition program. To continue the fight against child hunger across North Carolina during the summer, the time of year when food insecurity is often highest, NCDHHS will operate SUN Bucks again for Summer 2026, and will issue benefits of \$120 per eligible child to help families purchase nutritious food.

A child qualifies if they:

- Are school-aged and their household already participates in NC's Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Medicaid; **or**
- Attend a school that offers the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, and their household income meets the requirements for free or reduced-price school meals.

Children who meet the criteria above are automatically eligible and do not need to apply. Families who do not meet the automatic eligibility criteria may apply for benefits.

Sun Bucks is administered by the Division of Child and Family Well-being. There is no cost to counties; however, County Departments of Social Services may experience an increase in calls and inquiries related to the program.

## **IX. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION REIMBURSEMENT SYSTEM (CARS) – REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Procurement continues for the CARS Modernization Project, which will replace and modernize SIS (Daysheets), the DSS 1571 process, and the County Administrative Reimbursement System. Vendor award is expected in summer 2026, with an anticipated go-live date in 2028.

A primary goal is reducing the large amount of time direct workers, especially Children and Adult Services staff, spend completing Daysheets. As part of this project, the state intends to shift from 100% time reporting (Daysheets), to a Random Moment Time Sample (RMTS) approach, or a hybrid RMTS/100% time reporting model. At the appropriate time, counties will be engaged as critical stakeholders in the project.

**I. PROGRAMS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

**A. DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Program Name: 01. Work First Family Assistance**

**Service Name: Work First Family Assistance**

**Brief Program Description:**

**Electing Counties:**

Electing Counties have flexibility in the implementation of their work programs, including certain eligibility criteria and benefit levels. Electing Counties must continue to follow certain State and Federal legislative requirements, such as mandatory screening for substance use and non-citizen eligibility rules. The funding for cash assistance is included in the Electing Counties' Work First Block Grant. Electing counties are responsible for the cost of cash assistance payments that result from increased caseloads beyond the funds that have been allocated.

The following counties are designated as electing for the State Fiscal Year's 2026-2028: Beaufort, Caldwell, Catawba, Lenoir, Lincoln, Macon, and Wilson. These counties will be approved to continue as electing counties when the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families State Plan is approved by the North Carolina General Assembly and certified by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families for 2026-2028.

**Standard Counties:**

All remaining counties will operate under the State's Work First Program and are considered Standard Counties by legislation and Work First Policy. The funding for cash assistance will not be considered part of the Work First County Block Grant in the Standard Counties. Standard counties are not required to budget additional funds if caseloads increase beyond the level projected in these estimates.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds for electing counties only once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  100%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:**  P.L.104-193

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A-27.11

**Related web links for this program:**  Work First Family Assistance   
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/work-first-family-assistance>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 02. Title IV-B Adoption Assistance Payments**

**Service Name: Adoption Services**

**Brief Program Description:**

Title IV-B Adoption Assistance funds are paid on behalf of children in the custody of local social service agencies that are not eligible for IV-E funding. Local social service agencies are responsible for determining IV-B eligibility and conducting annual verification of continued eligibility in order for adoptive families to receive adoption assistance and for counties to be reimbursed for eligible expenditures. Reasonable, but unsuccessful efforts to place the child with a suitable adoptive family without providing adoption assistance, unless such efforts would not be in the best interest of the child, must be documented. Adoption assistance benefits begin, for eligible children, the month after the final order of adoption. Payments made cannot be more than the foster care board rate.

Adoption assistance benefits terminate at age 18 except for young adults who were adopted at 16 or 17 years of age who continue to meet the requirements connected to extended foster care. Those young adults continue to be eligible for adoption assistance benefits until they turn 21. Please see the Adoption Assistance Manual at the web address below for additional information on eligibility.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 75% County 25%

**Citation:** P.L. 112-34; P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171

**NC General Statute Reference:** G.S. 108A-50

**Related web link for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding\\_7-2024.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding_7-2024.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

This funding source may gradually increase as it continues to replace the state adoption assistance program that was in effect for adoptions completed prior to October 1, 2011. Funding may gradually increase as more adoptions are being completed.

**Program Name: 03. Title IV-B Adoption Vendor Payments**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Vendor payments are allowable costs made on behalf of children who are eligible for adoption assistance under Title IV-B Part I and Title IV-E Adoption Assistance funding categories, with a maximum payment of \$2,400 per year, for any combination of medical and non-medical services or treatment not covered by any medical insurance program, such as Medicaid or private insurance. Vendor payments must be for services or treatments for disabilities that existed prior to the adoption. (See XII. VENDOR PAYMENTS TO MEDICAL OR THERAPEUTIC PROVIDERS in the Adoption Assistance Funding Manual for details on allowable expenses at the web address provided below.)

The required county financial participation rate is 25% and the state share is 75% for children covered under Title IV-B Part I. Counties make payments on behalf of a child to adoptive parents or providers and are then reimbursed by the state when expenses are not covered by other resources.

The authority for the Adoption Assistance Vendor Payments is codified in the Administrative Rule 10A NCAC 70M .0401.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 75% County 25%

**Citation:** P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171

**NC General Statute Reference:** S.L 2009-451

**Related web link for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding\\_7-2024.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding_7-2024.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 04. State Adoption Assistance Payments**  
(Available only for adoptions prior to October 1, 2011)

**Service Name:** Adoption Services

**Brief Program Description:**

State Adoption Assistance Payments are provided to adoptive families on behalf of eligible special needs children placed in eligible adoptive homes by licensed child-placing agencies. Local social service agencies determine Title IV-B Part I eligibility for children and conduct annual verification of continued eligibility. Reasonable, but unsuccessful, efforts to place the child with a suitable adoptive family without providing adoption assistance, unless such efforts would not be in the best interest of the child, must be documented. Adoption assistance begins the month after the final order of adoption. Payments made cannot be more than the foster care board rate.

Adoption assistance benefits terminate at age 18 except for young adults who were adopted at 16 or 17 years of age who continue to meet the requirements connected to extended foster care. Those young adults continue to be eligible for adoption assistance benefits until they turn 21.

Please see the Adoption Assistance Manual at the web address below for additional information on eligibility.

The authority for these payments is codified in 10A NCAC 70M .0403. On September 15, 2011, the Rules Review Commission amended this rule, which became effective October 1, 2011. The State Fund is no longer available for a child to whom a Decree of Adoption is issued on or after October 1, 2011. Children receiving state adoption assistance must have met the eligibility requirements in place at the time of adoption.

State Adoption Assistance Payments Program does not include county funds.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 100% County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** a 10A NCAC 70M .0403

**NC General Statute Reference:** N.C.G.S. 108A-49

**Related web link for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding\\_7-2024.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding_7-2024.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Funding under the state adoption assistance program will gradually decrease each year as children adopted prior to October 1, 2011, exit the adoption assistance program.

**Program Name: 05. Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Payments**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services

**Brief Program Description:**

IV-E Adoption Assistance, authorized by Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, provides federal financial participation adoption assistance benefits to children with special needs meeting Title IV-E eligibility requirements. Local social service agencies are responsible for determining Title IV-E eligibility for children, managing adoption assistance cases, and conducting annual verification of continued eligibility. Reasonable, but unsuccessful efforts to place the child with a suitable adoptive family without providing adoption assistance, unless such efforts would not be in the best interest of the child, must be documented. Adoption assistance begins, for eligible children, the month after the final order of adoption. Payments cannot be more than the foster care board rate.

Adoption assistance benefits terminate at age 18 except for young adults who were adopted at 16 or 17 years of age who continue to meet the requirements connected to extended foster care. Those young adults continue to be eligible for adoption assistance benefits until they turn 21.

Please see the Adoption Assistance Manual at the web address below for additional information on eligibility.

Funding for Title IV-E Adoption Assistance is Federal, State, and County.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 67.71% State 16.145% County 16.145%

**Citation:** P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171

**NC General Statute Reference:** N.C.G.S. 108A-49

**Related web link for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding\\_7-2024.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding_7-2024.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

As of July 1, 2024, all children are eligible based on age, which will increase program costs.

**Program Name: 06. Title IV-E Non-Recurring Adoption Expense Payments**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-514) requires states to assist adoptive parent(s) with payment of non-recurring adoption expenses related to the legal adoption of a special needs child, which was not incurred in violation of state and federal law, and which are not reimbursed from other funds or sources. The State must enter into an adoption assistance agreement prior to the finalization of the adoption. The only eligibility criterion to be applied for reimbursement of the non-recurring expenses of adoption is that the State determines that the child meets the definition of special needs, in accordance with section 473 (c) of the Act. A child is eligible for this benefit regardless of whether or not the child is Title IV-E eligible. Social service agencies are responsible for non-recurring reimbursements to adoptive families or providers.

Federal financial participation is available at the matching rate of 50 percent for State expenditures up to \$2,000 for each adoptive placement. Social service agencies make direct payments to adoptive families and request reimbursements from the State.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 50% State 25% County 25% s

**Citation:** P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171

**NC General Statute Reference:** N.C.G.S. 108A-49

**Related web link for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding\\_7-2024.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-6-Adoption-Assistance-Funding_7-2024.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 07. Title IV-E Foster Care - Standard Board Rate**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

This program reimburses counties for maintenance payments for IV-E eligible children in county-licensed foster homes and for the combined maintenance and administrative rate for IV-E eligible children placed in foster homes licensed by child-placing agencies.

Reimbursement under this program requires that a child be placed in a licensed family foster home and have been determined to meet IV-E eligibility criteria. Details can be found in Appendix 3.5 Foster Care Funding 1. Funding for Foster Care Maintenance Payments. C. Title IV-E. The General Assembly sets the Standard Board Rates for foster care.

The standard board rates for SFY 2026-27 are as follows:

Child's Age	Maximum State Participation
0 – 5	\$ 702 / month
6 – 12	\$ 742 / month
13 and above	\$ 810 / month

**Standardized Rates for Child Placing Agencies:** Through participation in an annual cost finding and rate-setting process, Child Placing Agencies establish a supportable basis for state and federal participation above the standard board rate. All participating agencies will be approved for a standard maximum rate of reimbursement to county departments of social services placing children with these agencies. The standardized rates will be established based on the child's age, using the same breakpoints as the standard board rates. Family foster care will have a maintenance portion and an administrative portion.

The standardized maximum participation for state and federal participation for SFY 2024-25 are as follows:

**Family Foster Care Standardized Rates for Child Placing Agencies**

Child's Age	Maintenance	Administration	Total
0 – 5	\$ 702 / month	\$ 1,152 / month	\$1,854 / month
6 – 12	\$ 742 / month	\$ 1,271 / month	\$2,013 / month
13 and above	\$ 810 / month	\$ 1,285 / month	\$2,095 / month

**County Direct Reimbursement:**

The reimbursement will be limited to the standard facility rate, or the actual amount paid, whichever is less. All state and federal financial participation will be reimbursed directly to the county social service agencies.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:**

Maintenance Cost: Federal 67.71% State 16.145% County 16.145%  
Administrative Cost: Federal 50% State 25% County 25%

**Citation:** P.L. 111-320a

**NC General Statute references:** S.L. 2009 – 451 SECTION 10.45.(e)

**Related web links for this program:** [018 Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

SL 2023-14 provided two increases for foster care payments that became effective July 1, 2023. Under Section 6.7(a) the foster care board rates were increased, and Section 6.8 included a special appropriation to implement an increase to the administrative portion of the cost modeled rates for participating private providers.

**Program Name: 08. Title IV-E Foster Care Maximization**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

This program reimburses counties for maintenance payments for IV-E eligible children in licensed child caring institutions.

Through participation in an annual cost modeling process, Child Caring Institutions establish a supportable basis for state and federal participation above the standard board rate. All participating agencies will be approved for a standard maximum rate of reimbursement to county social service agencies placing children with these agencies. The standardized rates will be established based on child's age, using the same breakpoints as the standard board rates.

As part of the Family First Prevention Services Act, the federal government is refocusing its support on keeping children in families both by funding services to prevent children from entering foster care and by reducing support for residential childcare facility placements for foster children. It is recommended that counties work to increase their capacity to place children in kinship and foster homes.

The standardized maximum participation for state and federal participation for SFY 2026-2027 are as follows:

**Residential Care Standardized Rates for Child Caring Institutions**

Child's Age	Maximum Federal and State Participation
0 - 5	\$ 4,506 / month
6 - 12	\$ 4,598 / month
13 and above	\$ 4,692 / month

**County Direct Reimbursement:**

The reimbursement will be limited to the standard facility rate, or the actual amount paid, whichever is less. Reimbursement is based on the number of compliance days in the period. All state and federal financial participation will be reimbursed directly to the county DSS agencies.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:**

**For Placements Made Prior to October 1, 2021, and for participants in adolescent parenting programs and young adults in Foster Care 18-21)**

Maintenance Cost: Federal 67.71% State 16.145% County 16.145%

**For Placements Made After October 1, 2021 (First 14 days)**

Maintenance Cost: Federal 67.71% State 16.145% County 16.145%

**For Placements Made After October 1, 2021 (Beginning with the 15<sup>th</sup> day in the placement)**

Maintenance Cost: Federal 0.0% State 83.855% County 16.145%

**Citation:** P.L. 111-320a

**NC General Statute references:**

**Related web links for this program:** [018\\_Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_  
(If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Because of the FFPSA 14-day limit on federal participation in most group placements effective for new placements after October 1, 2021, federal IV-E funding for those placements is decreased. By law, the state shares equally with counties the cost of placements not covered by federal IV-E funds up to the standard facility rate.

**Program Name: 09. Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Payments**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

IV-E Guardianship, authorized by Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, provides federal financial participation Guardianship Assistance benefits to children meeting Title IV-E eligibility requirements. Local social service agencies are responsible for determining Title IV-E eligibility for children, managing Guardianship Assistance cases, and conducting annual verification of continued eligibility. Guardianship Assistance begins, for eligible children, the month after the final order of guardianship. Payments cannot be more than the foster care board rate.

Rules for who is eligible to receive Guardianship Assistance benefits are detailed in the Guardianship Assistance Payments Manual in Section III. Eligibility and Section 10. Termination of Guardianship Assistance Benefits/Payments. Eligibility for IV-E Guardianship Assistance additionally requires that a child have been determined to be IV-E eligible upon entering foster care. Guardianship Assistance benefits terminate when a youth turns 18 unless the youth entered Guardianship Assistance on or after turning age 16, in which case benefits continue to age 21 if requirements, as specified in the manual, are met.

Funding for Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance is Federal, State, and County.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  67.71%  State  16.145%  County  16.145% 

**Citation:** P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171  
(Public Law 110-351)

**NC General Statute Reference:** N.C.G.S. 108A-49

**Related web link for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3.7-Guardianship-Assistance-Payments-4-2024.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Utilization of this program is expected to increase over time due to legislative changes that have expanded support for guardianship assistance.

**Program Name: 10. State Guardianship Assistance Payments**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Guardianship State Assistance funds are paid on behalf of children in the custody of local social service agencies that are not eligible for IV-E funding. Local social service agencies are responsible for determining IV-E eligibility and conducting annual verification of continued eligibility in order for guardianship families to receive Guardianship Assistance and for counties to be reimbursed for eligible expenditures. Guardianship Assistance benefits begin, for eligible children, the month after the final order of guardianship. Payments made cannot be more than the foster care board rate.

Rules for who is eligible to receive Guardianship Assistance benefits are detailed in the Guardianship Assistance Payments Manual in Section III. Eligibility and Section 10. Termination of Guardianship Assistance Benefits/Payments. Guardianship Assistance benefits terminate when a youth turns 18 unless the youth entered Guardianship Assistance on or after turning age 16, in which case benefits continue to age 21 if requirements as specified in the manual are met.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 50% County 50%

**Citation:** P.L. 112-34; P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171  
(Public Law 110-351)

**NC General Statute Reference:** G.S. 108A-50

**Related web link for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3.7-KinGAP-GAP-Payments\\_11-2025.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3.7-KinGAP-GAP-Payments_11-2025.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Utilization of this program is expected to increase over time due to legislative changes that have expanded support for guardianship assistance.

**Program Name:** 11. Title IV-E Extended Foster Care (Foster Care 18-21)

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Extended Foster Care Payments are provided to youth who opt to continue receiving foster care benefits and services after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Eligible youth must have aged out of foster care at age 18, be 18 years of age but not yet 21, and meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;
- (2) enrolled in an institution that provides post-secondary or vocational education;
- (3) participation in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to, employment;
- (4) employed for at least 80 hours per month; or
- (5) incapable of completing the educational or employment requirements of this subsection due to a medical condition or disability.

Youth who are eligible and opt to continue receiving foster care benefits must enter a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) for Foster Care 18 to 21 Services with a county child welfare agency. Local child welfare agencies determine the eligibility of extended foster care and conduct verification of continued eligibility on a monthly basis. Written verification of continued eligibility is obtained every six (6) months. Extended foster care payments begin the month the youth signs the VPA. County child welfare agencies have the option to pro-rate the payment the month the VPA is signed or provide the youth with the entire foster care payment. Payments are in the amount of the standard board rate as approved by the General Assembly. The authority for these payments can be found in 10A NCAC 70B .0102.

Initial IV-E eligibility ends on a youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and IV-E eligibility must be re-evaluated using the DSS-5120E. Young adults aged 18, 19, and 20 do not need to meet financial need requirements to be IV-E eligible. The monthly payment for foster care for those youth age 18-21 is the standard monthly foster care board payment. For SFY 2026-2027, that amount is \$810.00 a month. A licensed placement is not required as long as the eligibility and program rules for FC 18-21 are met. Those rules can be found in Appendix 3.5 Foster Care Funding in the Title IV-E section under the subheading Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) with a Young Adult 18-21.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 67.71% State 32.29% County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** a P.L. 110-351, P.L. 115-123

**NC General Statute Reference:** N.C.G.S 108A-48

**Related web link for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/appendix-3-5-foster-care-funding-2-24.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  No  (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Program costs may slightly increase in SFY 2027 because of the increase of eligible youth, awareness of the program, eligibility requirements, and as a result of the increase in the standard board rate that became effective July 1, 2023.

**Program Name: 12. State Extended Foster Care (Foster Care 18-21)**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Extended Foster Care (EFC) payments are provided to youth who opt to continue receiving foster care benefits and services after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Eligible youth must have aged out of foster care at age 18, be 18 years of age but not yet 21, and meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;
- (2) enrolled in an institution that provides post-secondary or vocational education;
- (3) participating in a program or activity designed to promote, or remove barriers to, employment;
- (4) employed for at least 80 hours per month; or,
- (5) incapable of completing the educational or employment requirements of this subsection due to a medical condition or disability.

Youth who are eligible and opt to continue receiving foster care benefits must enter a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) for Foster Care 18 to 21 Services with a county child welfare agency. Local child welfare agencies determine the eligibility of Extended Foster Care and conduct verification of continued eligibility on a monthly basis. Written verification of continued eligibility is obtained every six (6) months. EFC payments begin the month the youth sign the VPA.

Payments are in the amount of the standard board rate as approved by the General Assembly. The authority for these payments can be found in 10A NCAC 70B .0102. County child welfare agencies are held harmless from contributing 50 percent of the foster care payment for youth receiving EFC services.

When young adults enter Foster Care 18-21, IV-E eligibility must be evaluated using the DSS-5120E. State Foster Home funds should not be used for young adults who are IV-E eligible. For those young adults who meet program requirements but are not IV-E eligible, State Foster Home Funds (SFHF) pay 100 percent of the standard board rate. A young adult's placement is not required to be licensed so long as the eligibility and program rules for FC 18-21 are met. Those rules can be found in Appendix 3.5 Foster Care Funding in the Title IV-E section under the subheading Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) with a Young Adult age 18-21. That amount is currently \$810 a month.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 100% County \_\_\_

**Citation:** a 10A NCAC 70B .0102

**NC General Statute Reference:** N.C.G.S 108A-48

**Related web link for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/appendix-3-5-foster-care-funding-2-24.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Program costs may slightly increase in SFY 2026 because of the increase of eligible youth, awareness of the program, eligibility requirements, and as a result of the increase in the standard board rate that became effective July 1, 2024.

**Program Name: 13. State Foster Care Benefits Program**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The State Foster Care Benefits Program provide financial assistance payments for the costs of care for children in need of out of home care. These costs are shared between the counties and the state at the rate of state 50% and county 50% up to the established rate for the placement type.

To receive maintenance payments through the State Foster Care Benefits Program, a child must be in a placement with a license number issued by the North Carolina Division of Social Services. The state program should not be used if a child is IV-E eligible.

The General Assembly sets the Standard Board Rates for foster care.

The standard board rates for SFY 2026-27 are as follows:

Child's age	Maximum state participation
0 – 5	\$ 702/ month
6 – 12	\$ 742/ month
13 and above	\$ 810/ month

**Standardized Rates for Child Placing Agencies**

The standardized maximum participation for state and federal participation for SFY 2026-27 are as follows:

**Family Foster Care Standardized Rates for Child Placing Agencies**

Child's Age	Maintenance	Administration	Total
0 – 5	\$ 702/ month	\$ 1,152 / month	\$1,854 / month
6 – 12	\$ 742/ month	\$ 1,271 / month	\$2,013 / month
13 and above	\$ 810/ month	\$ 1,285 / month	\$2,095 / month

**Residential Care Standardized Rates for Child Caring Institutions**

Child's Age	Maximum Federal and State Participation
0 - 5	\$ 4,506 / month
6 – 12	\$ 4,598 / month
13 and above	\$ 4,692 / month

**County Direct Reimbursement:**

The reimbursement will be limited to the standard facility rate, or the actual amount paid, whichever is less. All state and federal financial participation will be reimbursed directly to the county DSS agencies.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State  50%  County  50%

**Citation:**  P.L. 112-34, P.L. 113-183a

**NC General Statute references:**

**Related web links for this program:** [018 Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

There is no bridge funding currently allocated for SFY 2026 for congregate care placements not otherwise covered by Title IV-E funding. NCDHHS is assessing potential options, but cannot confirm whether there will be any funding available at this time. NCDHHS will immediately share any updates regarding possible additional funding with counties as they become available.

**Program Name: 14. State Kinship Care Program**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The State Kinship Care Benefits Program provide financial assistance payments for children in need of out of home care that are placed with kinship and qualifying fictive kinship homes. These costs are shared between the counties and the state at the rate of state 50% and county 50% up to the established rate for the placement type.

To receive maintenance payments through the State Kinship Care Benefits Program, a child must be in a placement with a qualifying kinship home. This state funding is used for both SFHF and IV-E eligible clients and reimbursement is based on the status of the home, not the client’s eligibility determination.

The General Assembly sets the Kinship Care Rates:

Currently these are established as half of the standard board rate. The kinship care rates for SFY 2026-27 are as follows:

Child’s age	Maximum state participation
0 – 5	\$ 351/ month
6 – 12	\$ 371/ month
13 and above	\$ 405/ month

**County Direct Reimbursement:**

The reimbursement will be limited to the standard kinship care rate, or the actual amount paid, whichever is less. All state funds will be reimbursed directly to the county DSS agencies.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State   50%   County   50%  

**Citation:** Session Law 2023-14 Senate Bill 20 Section 6  
<https://ncleg.gov/Sessions/2023/Bills/Senate/PDF/S20v6.pdf>

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 48-3-203

**Related web links for this program:** [018 Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Program Name: 15. Title IV-E Prevention Services Grant Program**

**Service Name:** Title IV-E Evidence-Based Prevention Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) passed in February 2018. This law allows states to extend federal (IV-E) reimbursement to cover certain expenditures and services related to preventing foster care placements. This includes evidence-based mental health, substance abuse and parenting services to keep children safely with their families. North Carolina has an approved Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan that includes the evidence-based services that have been approved to be implemented in North Carolina. To date the only evidence-based service available is Homebuilders.

Rules for who is eligible to receive Title IV-E Prevention Services and eligibility for the Homebuilders services are detailed in the North Carolina Child Welfare [Evidence-Based Prevention Services Policy](#).

Funding for Title IV-E Prevention Services are Federal and State.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No   X  

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  50.00%  State  50.00% 

**Citation:** Public Law (P.L.) 115-123

**NC General Statute Reference:**

**Related web link for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Evidence-Based-Prevention-Services-Policy-3-17-2025.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   No \_\_\_\_\_ (If “no”, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**  
Utilization of this program is expected to increase over time.

**Program Name: 16. Low Income Energy Assistance Payments**

**Service Name:** Low Income Energy Assistance Program

**Brief Program Description:**

Low Income Energy Assistance Payments (LIEAP) provides assistance to low-income households to assist in the cost of heating expenses. Eligible households receive a one-time LIEAP heating assistance payment made directly to their heating vendor. Only households containing an elderly person aged 60 and above or a disabled person receiving services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) are eligible to potentially receive benefits from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> or until funds are exhausted. Disabled persons are defined as receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Administration (SSA), or Veteran Administration (VA) disability. All households may apply January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year if funding is available. Households containing an elderly person aged 60 and above or a disabled person receiving services through DAAS must have income at or below 150% of poverty. All other households' income must be at or below 130% of poverty.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L.97-35

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A-25(a)(5)

**Related web links for this program:** Low Income Energy Assistance Program

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Funding is determined by the federal appropriations and approved plan of the NC General Assembly.

**Program Name: 17. Crisis Intervention Program**

**Service Name:** Emergency Energy Assistance

**Brief Program Description:**

The Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) assists low-income persons with a heating or cooling related crisis. The CIP program is part of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant. Households apply for the benefits at the local social services agencies or other contracted agencies. Each county receives an allocation to fund the CIP program based on the poverty rate in county and the county Food Nutrition Service caseload. The maximum assistance distributed to vendors on behalf of eligible households is up to \$600 per state fiscal year unless the state has received additional funds that would allow for a payment up to \$1000. Payment amounts vary based on the crisis and the amount needed to alleviate the energy crisis.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L.97-35

**NC General Statute references:** G.S.108A-25(a); 10A NCAC 71V

**Related web links for this program:** Low Income Energy Assistance Program

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Funding is determined by the federal appropriations and approved plan of the NC General Assembly.

**Program Name: 18. Duke Progress Energy – Share the Light Fund**

**Service Name:** Emergency Energy Assistance

**Brief Program Description:**

Duke Energy Progress’s (DEP) Share the Light Fund assists low-income DEP customers in a heating or cooling-related crisis. Share the Light Neighbor is funded 100 percent with contributions from DEP customers, employees, and corporate donations. Allocations are made only to counties that have DEP residential customers and are determined by DEP based on the number of DEP residential customers in 57 counties. The maximum benefit per eligible household is \$2,500 per state fiscal year. Funds remaining at the end of the state fiscal year are carried forward to the next state fiscal year.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** 100% Duke Energy Progress

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:**

**Related web links for this program:** Energy Programs

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Estimate based on prior year receipts. Allocation of funding is determined by Duke Energy Progress.

**Program Name: 19. Wake Electric Membership Corporation – Wake Electric Round Up Program**

**Service Name:** Emergency Energy Assistance

**Brief Program Description:**

Wake Electric Membership Corporation’s (WEMC) Wake Electric Round-Up Program assists low-income WEMC customers with a heating or cooling related crisis. WEMC is funded 100 percent with contributions from WEMC customers and employees. Allocations are made only to counties that have WEMC residential customers and are based on the number of WEMC residential customers in seven counties. The maximum benefit per eligible household is \$200 per state fiscal year. Funds are spent until exhausted or until the end of the state fiscal year. Funds remaining at the end of the state fiscal year are carried forward to the next state fiscal year.

Funds are available until exhausted.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** 100% Wake Electric Membership Corp

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:**

**Related web links for this program:** Energy Programs

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Estimate based on prior year receipts. Allocation of funding is determined by Wake Electric Membership Corp.

**Program Name: 20. Piedmont Natural Gas - Share the Warmth Program**

**Service Name: Emergency Energy Assistance**

**Brief Program Description:**

Piedmont Natural Gas's (PNG) Share the Warmth Program assists low-income PNG customers in a heating related crisis. Share the Warmth is funded 100 percent with contributions from PNG customers, employees, and corporate donations. Allocations are made only to counties that have PNG residential customers and are determined by PNG based on the number of PNG residential customers in 29 counties. The maximum benefit per eligible household is \$200 per state fiscal year. Funds remaining at the end of the state fiscal year are carried forward to the next state fiscal year.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** 100% Piedmont Natural Gas

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:**

**Related web links for this program:** Energy Programs

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Estimate based on prior year receipts. Allocation of funding is determined by Piedmont Natural Gas.

**Program Name: 21. Refugee Public Assistance**

**Service Name:** Refugee Cash Assistance

**Brief Program Description:**

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) provides income benefits to eligible refugees who do not meet qualifications for any other cash programs, including, Work First Cash Assistance, Supplemental Security Income, or Matching Grant. Eligibility for RCA is for up to four months from the date of arrival into the United States or date of eligible immigration status is granted (whichever is later). RCA is 100 percent federally funded through the US Office of Refugee Resettlement, US Department of Health and Human Services.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** Sec. 411 [8 U.S.C. 1521]

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program:** Refugee Assistance Program

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

The projected cost for SFY27 reflects anticipated changes in the number of eligible individuals arriving in North Carolina.

In FFY24, around 2,427 individuals enrolled. For FFY25, enrollment rose to about 4,397 individuals.

In FFY26, arrivals are projected to decrease to around 1,200 arrivals and perhaps 30% of these arrivals will be enrolled in RCA (360). However, potential policy changes at the federal level may result in a higher percentage of eligible clients enrolling in RCA. Based on these projections, the estimated cost submitted to the Office of Refugee Resettlement for FFY26 is **\$474,559**.

**Program Name: 22. State/County Special Assistance for Adults**

**Service Name:** State-County Special Assistance/ State-County Special Assistance In-Home

**Brief Program Description:**

The State/County Special Assistance (SA) is a State cash supplement entitlement program to the federal Supplemental Security Income. The payment supplements the recipients' income to assist with the cost of room and board for eligible individuals in certain licensed residential facilities. Eligible recipients are low-income adults aged 65 and older and adults age 18 through 64 with disabilities, who, based on their health care provider's statement, require the level of assistance provided in a licensed residential setting. Children under 18 who are legally blind and who reside in certain Specialized Community Residential Centers may also be eligible.

Individuals, who need care in a licensed residential facility, may remain safely living in a private living arrangement, with sufficient income, adequate housing, necessary health and social services, reliable informal supports, and case management through the Special Assistance In-home (SAIH) Program. The SAIH Program allows an eligible individual who meets criteria to receive a payment to enable them to receive care and services to remain safely in their homes.

The Medicaid costs are not displayed in this report.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State  50%  County  50%

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-25; 108A-40 to 108A-47.1; S.L. 2022-74

**Related web links for this program:**  https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/state-county-special-assistance-in-home

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** The Special Assistance caseload has increased by 10.9% from January 2025 (17,824 recipients) to December 2025 (19,759 recipients).

## C. DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

**Program Name:** 23. Food and Nutrition Benefits

**Service Name:** Food and Nutrition Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The objective of Food and Nutrition Services is to assist low-income households increase their food purchasing power and improve their nutritional level and health, and to assist low-income adults in obtaining employment and increasing their earnings. County departments of social services certify eligibility and provide benefits to households. FNS **benefits** are funded 100 percent by federal funds.

FNS benefits are funded 100 percent by federal funds through FFY 2027. **Beginning FFY 2028, Section 10105 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21) establishes a state matching requirement for food benefit costs ranging from 0 to 15 percent, based on the State's payment error rate.** States with lower error rates will have a lower matching requirement.

Note: Counties are reimbursed 50 percent for administrative costs to administer the program through September 30, 2026. **Effective October 1, 2026, Section 10106 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21) reduces the federal administrative cost reimbursement rate from 50 percent to 25 percent; therefore, counties will be reimbursed 25 percent for administrative costs beginning October 1, 2026, with state/county funds covering the remaining 75 percent.**

The Food and Nutrition Services Program is an entitlement program. The authorizing statute places no cap on the amount of funds available to reimburse States for allowable administrative expenses. Funds for administrative costs must be used to screen and certify applicants for program benefits, issue benefits to eligible households, conduct fraud investigations and prosecutions, provide fair hearings for clients who disagree.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L.110-246

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A-51, 108A-25.2

**Related web links for this program:** Food and Nutrition Services

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Increased administrative costs are projected due to the federal administrative cost reimbursement reduction under Section 10106 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21), which reduces the federal share from 50 percent to 25 percent effective October 1, 2026 (FFY 2027). This change doubles the state/county administrative cost burden for nine months of SFY 2026-2027.

Caseload may be affected by H.R. 1 eligibility policy changes, including:

- Expanded ABAWD work requirements for individuals ages 55-64 and narrowed exemptions for households with children ages 14-17 (effective December 1, 2025);
- Restricted non-citizen eligibility, limiting FNS to lawful permanent residents (LPRs), Cuban and Haitian entrants, and COFA migrants (effective February 1, 2026);
- Modified Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) eligibility based on LIHEAP receipt, now limited to households with elderly or disabled members (effective December 1, 2026).

An increase in administrative funding may be needed due to ongoing food insecurity needs, cross-enrollment due to Medicaid Expansion, and implementation costs associated with H.R. 1 policy changes including NC FAST system modifications and worker training.

**D. DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION**

**Program Name: 24. Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program - Direct Services**

**Service Name:** Subsidized Child Care Assistance-Program: At-Risk Employment Benefits

**Brief Program Description:**

The Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program is a service-oriented program that is administered by local purchasing agencies (LPA’s) that purchase childcare services for low income and other eligible families. LPA’s determine if families are qualified for childcare services based on state and federal rules and requirements. Families of children ages 0-5, and families of children with special needs, are eligible for subsidies if their countable income is less than or equal to 200% of the federal poverty level for the family size. Families of children ages 6-12 are eligible for subsidies if their countable income is less than or equal to 133% of the federal poverty level for the family size. Families may need childcare for one of the following reasons – maintain employment or seek employment; pursue education or job training that leads to employment; Child Welfare Services; Child Protective Services or to meet the child’s developmental needs. In addition, most eligible families are required to pay a portion of the cost of care based on countable income.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  No \_\_\_\_\_

Each county receives an annual allocation based on a formula that the General Assembly has approved. The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) issues each county a funding authorization for funds allocated, reverted or reallocated during the State Fiscal Year. If counties spend beyond their allocation, they must use local funds to pay for childcare assistance. Counties must set aside a specific amount of their initial allocation to serve children with special needs and those experiencing homelessness. In addition, counties may increase this amount using some of their direct services funding.

In SFY 2025-26 counties do not budget to pay providers in the Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program since the payments flow directly from DCDEE to providers through NC FAST. However, counties are still responsible for managing how they are spending their allocation even though they no longer make actual payments to providers.

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  X  State  X  County \_\_\_\_\_

Providers will be paid allowable services as set by the individual counties. Counties are required to monitor their county’s provider expenses as to not exceed the county allocation. Federal and state funds are blended at the state level which is invisible to counties.

**Citation:** Public Law 45 CRF 98, CCDBG Act of 2014

**NC General Statute references:** North Carolina Session Law (S.L.) 2023-134. North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) Title 10A, Chapter 10, NCGS 143C-6-23, and NCGS 143B-168.15(g).

**Related web links for this program:** [NC DCDEE](#). Select tabs *County* and *Subsidy Manual* from the Home Page.

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  (receive ongoing) No  (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Estimates are based on county's allocation as of January 1, 2025, minus any allocated IV-E (Foster Care) funding earned by the county. General Assembly of North Carolina Session 2021, Session Law 2021-189/Senate Bill 105 removed previous language referencing allowing counties with spending at least 92% of their previous year's allocation to be eligible to receive at least their ending allocation amount plus any additional available funds.

## II. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION

### A. DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**Program Name:** 25. Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) Administrative Funds

**Service Name:** Low Income Energy Assistance Program

**Brief Program Description:**

Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) Administration funds provide assistance to low-income households dealing with energy crisis (heating or cooling) by distributing benefits to vendors on behalf of eligible households. LIEAP and CIP are components of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), a federally funded program. County agencies receive administrative dollars to administer both the LIEAP and CIP programs. Expenditures of federal administrative dollars cannot exceed 10 percent of the county's total expenditures of federal service dollars for both components.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L. 97-35

**NC General Statute references:** G.S.108A-25(a); 10A NCAC 71V

**Related web links for this program:** Low Income Energy Assistance Program

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:**  
Funding is determined by the federal appropriations and approved plan of the NC General Assembly.

**Program Name: 26. Food and Nutrition Services Electronic Benefit Transfer Call Center**

**Brief Program Description:**

The Food and Nutrition Services Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Call Center provides assistance to all Food and Nutrition Services recipients who need to speak with a customer service representative regarding their EBT account. EBT recipients can use the E-Funds Voice Response Unit and receive automated assistance or to speak to an agent. The Call Center agent can assist the recipient to obtain EBT account balances, request replacement EBT card, change EBT card PIN number, submit exception claims for transaction disputes and other types of account activities.

Cost for the EBT Call Center is paid 50 percent by USDA and 50 percent by the County.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  50%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  50%

**Citation:**  P.L.110-246

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-51

**Related web links for this program:**  Food and Nutrition Services

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

The increase in Food and Nutrition Services is based on increased participation.

**Program Name: 27. Refugee Public Assistance Program Administration**

**Service Name:** Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Medical Assistance

**Brief Program Description:**

Refugee Cash Assistance and/or Refugee Medical Assistance is available for eligible refugee clients for up to four months from the date of arrival into the United States or date of eligible immigration status is granted (whichever is later). County expenses incurred to administer Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance services are 100 percent federally funded through the US Office of Refugee Resettlement, US Department of Health and Human Services.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** Sec. 411 [8 U.S.C. 1521]

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program:** Refugee Assistance Program

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Decreased cost of these two programs is based on a significant decrease in the number of eligible persons arriving in North Carolina. In FFY25, approximately 4,397 individuals were enrolled in RCA and 2,207 were enrolled in RMA. Projecting forward, North Carolina is anticipating the RCA and RMA utilization in FFY25 will be moderately higher than that proposed in FFY24. In FFY26, we anticipate the number of arrivals will be only 1,200. The estimated cost submitted to Office of Refugee Resettlement to cover RCA is \$474,559 (a decrease from FFY25 of approximately \$4 million), and for RMA \$1,154,715 (a decrease from FFY25 of approximately \$4.8 million).

**Program Name: 28. State/County Special Assistance Administration**

**Service Name:** State-County Special Assistance Adult Care Home/State-County Special Assistance In-Home

**Brief Program Description:**

**County administrative costs for the SA Program:**

This allocation is for the administration cost of the State/County Special Assistance Program. The State/County Special Assistance (SA) is a State cash supplement entitlement program to the federal Supplemental Security Income. The payment supplements the recipients' income to assist with the cost of room and board for eligible individuals in certain licensed residential facilities. Eligible recipients are low-income adults aged 65 and older and adults age 18 through 64 with disabilities, who, based on their health care provider's statement, require the level of assistance provided in a licensed residential setting. Children under 18 who are legally blind and who reside in certain Specialized Community Residential Centers may also be eligible.

Individuals, who need care in a licensed residential facility, may remain safely living in a private living arrangement, with sufficient income, adequate housing, necessary health and social services, reliable informal supports, and case management through the Special Assistance In-home (SAIH) Program. The SAIH Program allows an eligible individual who meets criteria to receive a payment to enable them to receive care and services to remain safely in their homes.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  50%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  50%

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  75%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  25%  (Eligibility Determination activities only)

**Citation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-25; 108A-40 to 108A-47.1.

**Related web links for this program:** <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/special-assistance>

**Funds recurring into future years:**  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation :)

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

## C. DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

### **Program Name: 29. Food and Nutrition Services Program Administration**

**Service Name:** Food and Nutrition Services

#### **Brief Program Description:**

The objective of Food and Nutrition Services is to assist low-income households increase their food purchasing power and improve their nutritional level and health. County departments of social services certify eligibility and provide benefits to households. FNS benefits are funded 100 percent by federal funds. Counties are reimbursed 50 percent for administrative costs to administer the program through September 30, 2026.

**Effective October 1, 2026, Section 10106 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21) reduces the federal administrative cost reimbursement rate from 50 percent to 25 percent; therefore, counties will be reimbursed 25 percent for administrative costs beginning October 1, 2026, with state/county funds covering the remaining 75 percent.**

The Food and Nutrition Services Program is an entitlement program. The authorizing statute places no cap on the amount of funds available to reimburse States for allowable administrative expenses. Funds for administrative costs must be used to screen and certify applicants for program benefits, issue benefits to eligible households, conduct fraud investigations and prosecutions, provide fair hearings for clients who disagree with an eligibility decision made on their case, and prepare financial and special reports.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  50%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  50%  (Admin)

**Effective October 1, 2026, Section 10106 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21) reduces the federal administrative cost reimbursement rate for the Food and Nutrition Services program from 50 percent to 25 percent.** Counties will be reimbursed 25 percent for FNS administrative costs beginning October 1, 2026, with state and county funds covering the remaining 75 percent. This change applies to nine months of SFY 2026–2027 (October 2026 through June 2027) and will significantly increase the county share of FNS administrative costs. Counties should plan their SFY 2027 budgets accordingly to account for this reduction in federal reimbursement.

**Citation:**  P.L.110-246

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-51,

**Related web links for this program:** Food and Nutrition Services

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:**

**Administrative Cost Increase:** Increased administrative costs are projected due to the federal administrative cost reimbursement reduction under Section 10106 of H.R. 1 (Pub. L. 119-21), which reduces the federal share from 50 percent to 25 percent effective October 1, 2026 (FFY 2027). This change doubles the state/county administrative cost burden for nine months of SFY 2026-2027 (October 2026 through June 2027).

**Eligibility Policy Changes:** Caseload may be affected by H.R. 1 eligibility policy changes, including: expanded ABAWD work requirements for individuals ages 55-64 and narrowed exemptions for households with children ages 14-17 (effective December 1, 2025); restricted non-citizen eligibility, limiting FNS to lawful permanent residents (LPRs), Cuban and Haitian entrants, and COFA migrants (effective February 1, 2026); and modified Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) eligibility based on LIHEAP receipt, now limited to households with elderly or disabled members (effective December 1, 2025).

**Additional Cost Drivers:** An increase in administrative funding may be needed due to ongoing food insecurity needs, cross-enrollment due to Medicaid Expansion, and implementation costs associated with H.R. 1 policy changes including NC FAST system modifications and worker training.

**Program Name: 30. Food and Nutrition Incentive Fraud Collections**

**Service Name:** Food and Nutrition Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Food and Nutrition Services claims will be submitted to North Carolina Department of Revenue (DOR) electronically by Family Assessing Services Through Technology (NCFAST). The Division will continue to refer individuals to the DOR when their outstanding Intentional Program Violation (IPV) and/or Inadvertent Household Error (IHE) claim balance is \$50.00 or more.

State law requires, if a refund is applied against an agency debt that results in an over collection, the over collection plus interest is to be refunded to the debtor. If the total intercepted funds must be refunded, the collection assistance fee must also be included in the refund. The State Controller's Office processes these refunds. All claims, except Agency Error claims, will continue to be included in the Off-Set Debt Collection Program. DOR will provide an update on the interest rate every 6 months.

As with the North Carolina Debt Off-Set Tax Intercept Program (TOP), counties will retain 35% of all IPV monies intercepted. In addition, counties will be able to retain 20% of all IHE and 0% Agency Error (AE) funds collected through Federal Treasury Off-Set Program (For **TOP**: the total of all selected claim current balance amount(s) for each debtor must be \$25.00 or more.) Receipts from TOP can be estimated using the following factors:

1. Amount of claim certified for participation in TOP.
2. USDA/FCS incentive funding of 35% for all IPV claims intercepted and 20% for all IHE and AE claims intercepted.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  100%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:**  P.L.110-246

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-53

**Related web links for this program:**  Food and Nutrition Services

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (receive ongoing) No  X  (If no, give brief explanation):  Funds are determined based on collections.

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name: 31. Electronic Benefit Transfer E-Funds Cost**

**Service Name:** Food and Nutrition Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is the process via a debit card for recipients to receive Food and Nutrition Services. Automated files are sent from the North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) via the EBT Interface System (EBTIS) to eFunds (FIDELITY INFORMATION SERVICES LLC), the current EBT vendor to set up accounts for recipients to receive benefits. The benefit amounts are credited to the recipient's accounts and tracked at food retail outlets. Transactions are deducted from the balance in the accounts instantly through a Point-of-Sale (POS) terminal. Costs associated with EBT are eligible for reimbursement of federal funds at the standard administrative Federal Financial Participation rate of 50 percent Federal funds and 50 percent County Funds.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** (1) EBT - Federal  50%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  50%   
(2) SEBT- Federal  50%  State  50%  County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:**  P.L.110-246

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-51

**Related web links for this program:**  Food and Nutrition Services

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Increased cost is based on the total number of FNS recipients. An increase in funding may be needed due to an increased number of FNS recipients enrolled in the program as a result of ongoing food insecurity needs, food costs, and Medicaid expansion impacts as well as the permanent of the SEBT program.

**D. DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION**

**Program Name: 32. Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program – Service Support**

**Service Name: Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program: At-Risk Employment Benefits**

**Brief Program Description:**

The Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program allocates a portion of its funding to services support (administrative costs). Local purchasing agencies (LPA’s) can use the service support funds for salaries, employee benefits, travel, training, computers, computer software, communication and supplies. Services support costs are reported through the DSS-1571 as cost allocated across the agency or as a direct charge. LPA’s have the option of utilizing the services support funds solely for direct services or allocating a lesser amount towards direct services. When LPA’s choose this option, a written request must be submitted to the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) and the Office of the Controller in the Department of Health and Human Services for approval.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes   X   No       

Each county receives an annual allocation based on a formula that the General Assembly has approved. If counties spend beyond their allocation, they must use local funds to pay for any additional cost. Administrative funding is capped at 4% of the county’s base allocation or \$80,000, whichever is greater. Per S.L. 2023-134, counties may also use up to 2% of their allocation for fraud detection and investigation initiatives. Counties that choose to do this must notify DCDEE.

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal   X   State        County       

Counties are reimbursed for 100% of expenditures up to their allowable allocation. Federal and state funds are blended at the state level which is invisible to counties.

**Citation:** Public Law 45 CRF 98, CCDBG Act of 2014

**NC General Statute references:** North Carolina Session Law (S.L.) North Carolina Session Law 2023-134, North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) Title 10A, Chapter 10, NCGS 143C-6-23, and NCGS 143B-168.15(g).

**Related web links for this program:** [NC DCDEE](#). Select tabs *County Staff* and *Manual* from the Home Page.

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   (receive ongoing) No        (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Estimates are based on county's allocation as of January 1, 2025, minus any allocated IV-E (Foster Care) funding earned by the county. General Assembly of North Carolina Session 2021, Session Law 2021-189/Senate Bill 105 removed previous language referencing allowing counties with spending at least 92% of their previous year's allocation to be eligible to receive at least their ending allocation amount plus any additional available funds.

## **E. DIVISION OF HEALTH BENEFITS**

**Program Name: 33. The Work Number (Equifax/TALX)**

**Service Name: Employment & Income Verifications**

**Brief Program Description:**

The purpose of this contract is to provide workers with the resource needed to verify client statements of employment and income with real-time evidence, manage resources and provide an elevated level of effective and efficient service delivery.

A new, annual contract was executed by DHB, with the current contract expiring December 31, 2026. We anticipate a similar arrangement for the subsequent year. County costs for this service are generated by county worker usage. Usage above set transaction ceilings generates overage fees as does additional hits due to new employers added to The Work Number database.

The current contract operates under a monthly fixed fee format, at \$2,492,340 per month for a block of 4,250,000 transactions, annualized at \$29,908,083. Medicaid costs are covered at 100% by a combination of federal and state funding. Counties are responsible for the nonfederal share for other economic services programs and will be invoiced by DHB. Hits above that ceiling would result in triggering an Overage Block, at additional costs. Additional analysis is underway to understand the impact of HR1 on utilization of The Work Number for the Medicaid expansion population.

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 53% State        County 47%

**Related web links for this program:** [TheWorkNumber.com](http://TheWorkNumber.com)

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Costs are increasing based on contract negotiations with the vendor.

**Program Name: 34. Medicaid (Title XIX) Administration**

**Service Name:** None

**Brief Program Description:**

These funds are used by County Departments of Social Services for staff and overhead costs for administering the Medicaid program. Costs include taking and processing Medicaid applications, training, supervision, office space and equipment, supplies, and all overhead and indirect costs allocated to the Medicaid program based on the amount of time staff spend working directly in the Medicaid program.

State funds appropriated for county administrative costs have been posted on the County Budget Estimates website. These state funds are to replace county funding for the nonfederal share of Medicaid administrative costs, up to the amount allocated to each county.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_ (100% county funds once state allocation is spent)  
No X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 50% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 50%

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 75% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 25% (Eligibility Determination activities only)

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A-54

**Related web links for this program:** [Division of Health Benefits](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation): \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name: 35. Medicaid Expansion**

**Service Name:** None

**Brief Program Description:**

These funds are used by County Departments of Social Services for staff and overhead costs for administering the Medicaid program.

These funds may be used to hire and train staff (e.g., full-time, part-time, temporary, etc.), retain staff (e.g., retention bonuses, salary increases, etc.), and/or build technology infrastructure (e.g., computers, hybrid work solutions, etc.) to prepare for the ongoing demands of Medicaid expansion while meeting the significant demands associated with the Continuous Coverage Unwinding (CCU). DHHS understands there are significant needs and vacancies and encourages all counties to focus on filling existing staff vacancies and creating new roles for these ongoing staffing needs.

These funds represent the counties' 25% or 50% federal match for eligible Medicaid expenditure. Current E&E eligibility rules apply.

State funds appropriated for county administrative costs have been posted on the County Budget Estimates website. These state funds are to replace county funding for the nonfederal share of Medicaid administrative costs, up to the amount allocated to each county.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  (100% county funds once state allocation is spent)  
No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 50% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 50%  
**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 75% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 25% (Eligibility Determination activities only)

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A-54

**Related web links for this program:** [Division of Health Benefits](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  (receive ongoing) No  (If no, give brief explanation): \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** Counties received a small increase in program funding from prior SFY24 calculated by base amount plus caseload allocation from January 2025 beneficiary enrollment totals.

### III. SERVICES PROGRAMS

#### A. DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**Program Name: 36. Social Services Block Grant - Federal and State**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services, Foster Care Services, Family Support Program Services & Child Protective Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Social Services Block Grant Funds (SSBG) are made available under Title XX of the Social Security Act. The matching rate for the regular SSBG allocation is 75% federal or state. Social worker time for family planning counseling is matched at 90% federal and 10% county. In-Home Services (including In-Home Case Management) are reimbursed at 87.5% federal and 12.5% county. In recognition of county flexibility to use these funds for various services - at various match rates - the estimates assume that all funds not otherwise targeted for specific services by the General Assembly will be used at the 75% rate. The estimates include the highest amount of county funds that will be required to match the federal dollars. Counties may choose to use these funds for other services at the applicable match rates and therefore adjust their county funding accordingly.

SSBG funds will be allocated on a quarterly basis.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement (SSBG Federal):** Federal  75%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  25%

**Percent Reimbursement (SSBG State):** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State  75%  County  25%

**Citation:** Social Security Act, as amended; The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997; P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171; P.L. 93-247

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 143B-153; 10A NCAC 71R

**Related web links for this program:** Social Services Block Grant Program  
015 Appendix 3.2 Child Welfare Funding – Child Welfare Funding – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals  
<https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/appendix-3-5-foster-care-funding-2-24.pdf>

017 Appendix 3.4 Child Welfare Funding – CPS – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals

019 Appendix 3.6 Child Welfare Funding – Adoption Assistance – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name: 37. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Transferred to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services, Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The estimates show a portion of the SSBG allocation as TANF transferred to the SSBG. These funds are pulled down by counties through worker day sheet coding and can be used for services for which V is an allowable program code. See the Services Information System (SIS) Manual Appendix B for allowable services (web address below). Additionally, to appropriately draw down these funds, recipients must be documented as TANF eligible, meaning the child or family being served must have income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, per Section 404(d)(3)(B) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. Additionally, as changes occur in the program, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, notifies county Departments of Social Services in DSS Administrative letters, Dear County Director Letters, and manual change notices. These letters and manual change notices should be used in conjunction with the Family Services Manual for the determination of program requirements.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 75% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 25%

**Citation:** P.L.93-247; P.L.111-320

**NC General Statute references:** G.S.143B-153; 10A NCAC 71R

**Related web links for this program:** [018 Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** No expected changes to expenditures in the SFY 26-27.

**Program Name: 38. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (NC LINKS)**

**Service Name:** Foster Care

**Brief Program Description:**

Chafee Foster Care Program Funds are made available to states through Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Approximately 67 percent of the grant is allocated directly to counties to assist them in providing transitional services and resources to youth in foster care ages 14 to 21, young adults currently or formerly in foster care at ages 18 to 21, youth who left foster care through adoption or guardianship (including KinGAP) at age 16 or older, youth “likely to age out of foster care”, youth who exit foster care after the age of 14 through reunification of a parent or primary caretaker; custody with non-removal parent or relative; or custody with other court approved caretaker. If it is determined by a collaborative process between the county and the State that a youth 13 years of age is likely to remain in foster care until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, LINKS funding and services may be provided to the youth to support their participation in age or developmentally appropriate activities. The funding for each county is based on a formula that includes 1) the number of eligible youth in foster care and the number of youth participating in Foster Care who are age 18 to 21, for the prior Federal fiscal year, and 2) the number of youth who have aged out of the county foster care system and are not participating in Foster Care for youth age 18 to 21. Funds are allocated to each county based on the formula. If additional funds are available, they are distributed to counties that may have experienced a significant reduction (more than 10 percent) in funding from the previous fiscal year.

In addition to the county allocations, the state administers LINKS Special Funds, which can be accessed by counties for expenditures on behalf of individual eligible youth.

Information on eligibility and allowable expenses for the LINKS program is found in appendix 3.5-Foster Care Funding, of the Child Welfare Policy Manual in Chapter VI. LINKS-Chafee Independence Act.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 80% State 20% County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** 42 U.S.C. 677a

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A-71

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/appendix-3-5-foster-care-funding-2-24.pdf>

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/PI-24-02.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  (receive ongoing) No  (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** Program cost may slightly increase in SFY 26-27 because of the increase of eligible youth, awareness of the program, and as a result of the increase in the standard board rate that became effective July 1, 2023.

**Program Name: 39. Child Protective Services Title IV-E**

**Service Name:** Child Protective Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Counties can draw federal IV-E funds for CPS In-Home (215) services to children who have been determined to be candidates for foster care, defined as a child at imminent or serious risk of removal from the home into foster care as evidenced by the county child welfare agency's making efforts to prevent removal or pursuing removal. The required documentation of candidacy is a written case plan that clearly indicates that absent effective preventive services, foster care is the planned arrangement for the child. The case plan must be developed together with the family, describe the services offered and provided to prevent removal of the child from the home, and document why the child is at serious or imminent risk of removal absent effective preventive services. A determination of Title IV-E candidacy permits the county to claim a 50% Federal Financial Participation rate after the application of the IV-E foster care eligibility rate (penetration rate) by coding Z protective services listed as eligible for Z coding in the SIS Manual, SIS 300 Appendix B. These include CPS In-Home (215) services.

**Code Z cannot be used for CPS In-Home services provided to children who are not documented as candidates. See the Candidacy for Foster Care section in the Cross Function manual.**

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_ No X

**Percent Reimbursement:** (after the penetration rate is applied) Federal 50% State 0%  
County 50%s

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** N.C.G.S. § 7B-300 Protective Services

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Cross-Functions-Oct-2024.pdf>

<https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/appendix-3-4-child-protective-services-funding.pdf>

[https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B\\_10102024\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B_10102024_FINAL_.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs: N/A**

**Program Name: 40. Child Protective Services – SSBG Expansion**

**Service Name:** Child Protective Services

**Brief Program Description:**

This replaces state appropriations that have been reduced for the same purpose. This appropriation shall be distributed based on the formula as the previous distribution method for CPS funds. Detailed documentation provided by counties based on staffing needs was used to allocate these funds. The net amount to all counties is the same and no match is required. Counties can pull down these funds on day sheets by using Program Code 23 for child protective services indicated as eligible for Code 23 in the Services Information System (SIS) manual Appendix B (web address below). To appropriately draw down these funds, recipients must be documented as TANF eligible, meaning the child or family being served must have income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, per Section 404(d)(3)(B) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (see SIS Manual Appendix B, web address below).

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

The sum of \$5,040,000 dollars is allocated as TANF transferred to SSBG funds to aid counties for Child Protective Services (CPS).

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  100%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** SOCIAL SECURITY ACT, AS AMENDED; THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT OF 1997; P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171; P.L. 93-247

**NC General Statute references:** SESSION LAWS 2004-124, 2005-276, AND 2011-145

**Related web links for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B\\_10102024\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B_10102024_FINAL_.pdf)

[https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS400-APPENDIX-C\\_04242024\\_FINAL.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS400-APPENDIX-C_04242024_FINAL.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (receive ongoing) No  X  (If no, give brief explanation): This would require a new provision in the State Budget.

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name:** 41. State CPS Caseload Reduction

**Service Name:** Child Protective Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The 2014 session of the N.C.G.A provided funds to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, to be allocated to county departments of social services three million eight hundred sixty-nine thousand nine hundred seventy dollars (\$3,826,587) shall be used to provide additional funding for child protective services' workers to reduce caseloads to an average of 10 families per worker. Thirty counties were determined to qualify for funds based upon a formula taking into account workloads and management. The 30 counties that received these funds can draw them down by coding CRF on day sheets for child protective services activities identified in the Services Information System (SIS) manual, SIS 300 Appendix B, as eligible for CRF program coding. (web address below).

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 100% County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** SL 2014-100 SB744

**Related web links for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B\\_10102024\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B_10102024_FINAL_.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name:** 42. Child Protective Services State

**Service Name:** Child Protective Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The 2014 session of the N.C.G.A provided funds to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, to be allocated to county departments of social services, four million five hundred thousand dollars (\$4,500,000) of those funds shall be used to replace federal funds counties lost during the 2013-2014 fiscal year previously used to pay for child protective services' workers. These funds remain the same each year. Counties can draw down these for CPS Intake, CPS Assessment, and CPS In-Home Services by coding CPS on day sheets for services identified as eligible for Program Code CPS in the Services Information System (SIS) Manual, SIS 300 Appendix B.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  State  County

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** SL 2014-100 SB744

**Related web links for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B\\_10102024\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B_10102024_FINAL_.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  (receive ongoing) No  (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 43. Child Welfare In-Home Expansion**

**Service Name: Child Protective Services (In-Home)**

**Brief Program Description:**

The 2014 Legislative short session provided additional funding for County Departments of Social Services to operate the programs and services to provide Child Protective Services, increasing General Fund appropriation for Child Welfare In-Home Services. In-Home Services are provided to maintain the safety of the child while helping the parent/caretaker learn more effective parenting practices. In-Home Services provide, arrange for, and coordinate interventions and services, as needed that focus on child safety and protection, family preservation, and the prevention of further abuse or neglect. Counties can draw down this funding through day sheet coding using program code IHE. Information about this funding source can be found in the Services Information System (SIS) manual using the web addresses below.

The state provides 100% non-federal share of costs.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X   
No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  0%  State  100%  County  0%

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** SL 2014-100 SB744

**Related web links for this program:** [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B\\_10102024\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS300-APPENDIX-B_10102024_FINAL_.pdf)

and

[https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS400-APPENDIX-C\\_04242024\\_FINAL.pdf](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/SIS400-APPENDIX-C_04242024_FINAL.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   (receive ongoing) No  X  (If no, give brief explanation): These funds were awarded on a non-recurring basis as a part of Senate Bill 402.

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 44. Permanency Planning**

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Permanency Planning-Family for Kids funds are used to support direct services (provided by agency staff or purchased) and system reform activities aimed at ensuring permanence for children who are:

- (1) at imminent risk of entering DSS custody or placement responsibility;
- (2) in agency custody/placement responsibility for less than 12 months;
- (3) in agency custody/placement responsibility for more than 12 months and for whom the plan is NEITHER long-term foster care NOR reunification with birth parents; OR
- (4) who have left DSS custody/placement responsibility within the previous 12 months (including post-adoption services).

**Reimbursable Activities Include:**

- Intensive Family Preservation Services or other services designed specifically to prevent out-of-home placement;
- Time-Limited Family Reunification Services during first fifteen months of entry into out-of-home placement;
- Staff time on behalf of children in the identified population;
- Post-Adoption Services and Independent Living Services;
- Supportive intervention services to family members, relatives, caretakers as needed to achieve stability and permanence;
- Recruitment and training of foster and adoptive parents;
- Legal services designed specifically to achieve permanence for children.

**Non-reimbursable activities include:**

- Staff time or supportive services on behalf of children who have been in agency custody/placement responsibility for more than 12 months and for whom the plan is reunification with birth parents;
- Staff time or supportive services on behalf of children who have been in agency custody/placement responsibility for more than 12 months and for whom the plan is custody or guardianship with an **unidentified** relative or other caretaker;
- Any type of residential care or child day care payment.
- Purchase of therapeutic services covered by other funding resources
- Education services
- CPS Case Planning and Case Management Services
- Data Processing services
- Medical services, except cosmetic services not covered by other funding sources

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 75% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 25%

A county must budget local funds in order to secure the required local matching share when federal/State financial participation is less than one hundred percent to the county Department of Social Services. Jackson and Swain Counties receive a portion of Regular Permanency Planning funds for their Native American populations.

**Citation:** P.L. 93-247, P.L. 112-34 \_\_\_\_\_

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/modified-manual-1/appendix-3-3-prevention-services-funding.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 45. Family Reunification Services**

**Service Name:** Family Reunification Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Family Reunification Funds are made available to states through Title IVB-II of the Social Security Act to provide or purchase services to facilitate safe reunification for children in foster care. Services can be provided while children are in foster care and for up to 15 months after custody has been returned. Title IVB-II specifies the services for which these funds can be used:

- Individual, group, and family counseling.
- Inpatient, residential, or outpatient substance abuse treatment services.
- Mental health services.
- Assistance to address domestic violence.
- Services designed to provide temporary childcare and therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries.
- Peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and primary caregivers.
- Services and activities designed to facilitate access to and visitation of children by parents and siblings.
- Transportation to or from any of the services and activities described in this subparagraph.

Case management activities by the child’s foster care worker and other activities or services not listed above are not eligible for reimbursement under this grant. Funds cannot be used to pay for services if children are not in the legal custody of the county or have not been in the county’s legal custody in the previous 15 months.

Each county child welfare agency must submit an annual report and an annual plan to NC Division of Social Services (NC DSS), even if the agency did not expend any Title IVB-II Family Reunification funds the previous year.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L. 93-247, P.L. 112-34 \_\_\_\_\_

**NC General Statute references:** none

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/document/appendix-3-3-child-welfare-funding-prevention-funding/>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  (receive ongoing) No  (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

NC DSS allocates 100% of the Title IVB-II funds required to be spent on family reunification directly to counties. NC DSS expects the total allocation to counties to remain relatively the same as SFY 2025 or increase slightly for SFY 2026 to correspond to NC's Title IVB-II allocation.

Funds are allocated to counties using a formula that includes a \$5,000 minimum allocation plus an additional amount based on the state's Title IVB-II allocation and the numbers of children served in foster care in each county in previous years. The final allocation will be adjusted based on North Carolina's Title IVB-II allocation and on an updated quarterly average of the number of children in foster care in each county. Therefore, individual counties may experience an increase or decrease depending on the most recent numbers of children in care in that county.

**Program Name:** 46. Foster Care/Adoptions – State

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services & Adoption Services

**Brief Program Description:**

These state funds are allocated to 25 of the 100 county departments of social services for financial support for administrative costs in delivering the child welfare programs. As the federal government participates in the cost of administration of the program for eligible children at the federal financial participation rate of 50%, these funds are to be used to provide matching funds, up to the total allocation.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State 100% County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L. 93-247; P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171

**NC General Statute references:** SL 2009-451

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/wp-content/uploads/Permanency-Planning-Manual-Oct-2024.pdf>

Adoption Services (https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/adoptions-1.pdf)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_  
(If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name:** 47. Title IV-E Administration Foster Care 50% Federal – 50% County

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Counties can draw federal matching funds at 50% FFP for the proper and efficient administration of the State Title IV-E Plan. The county is responsible for the remaining 50%. Information about what costs are allowable can be found in Appendix 3.2 Child Welfare Funding and Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care of the Child Welfare Policy Manual. and in the Services Information System (SIS) Manual.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 50% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 50%

**Citation:** P.L. 93-247; P.L. 96-272; P.L. 113-183

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/appendix-3-2-child-welfare-funding-2.pdf>

[018\\_ Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

[015\\_ Appendix 3.2 Child Welfare Funding – Child Welfare Funding – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

[SIS300 Service Codes and Definitions Appendix B – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 48. TANF Child Welfare Workers for Local DSS**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services, Foster Care Services, Family Support Program Services & Child Protective Services

**Brief Program Description:**

From the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant, as specified in SL 2009-451, Section 10.78(i) which states TANF shall be allocated to county departments of social services for hiring or contracting staff to investigate and provide services in Child Protective Services cases; to provide foster care and support services; to recruit, train, license and support prospective foster and adoptive families; and to provide interstate and post-adoption services for eligible families.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  100%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:** P.L. 96-272 (Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980); P.L. 99-514 (Tax Reform Act of 1996); P.L. 103-382 (Improving America's Schools Act); P.L. 106-395 (Child Citizenship Act of 2000); P.L. 105-89 (Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997); P.L. 106-169 (Foster Care Independence Act of 1999); P.L. 109-171 (Deficit Reduction Act of 2005); P.L. 93-247 (CAPTA of 1974); Social Security Act, as amended.

**NC General Statute references:** SL 2013-360 Section 12J.1.(h)

**Related web links for this program:** Child Welfare Funding Appendix 3.2 (https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/appendix-3-2-child-welfare-funding-2.pdf)

Services Information System (SIS) manual Appendix B:  
https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/services-information-system-sis/policy-manuals/sis300-appendix-b.pdf

Services Information System (SIS) manual Appendix C:  
https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/services-information-system-sis/policy-manuals/sis400-appendix-c.pdf

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_  
(If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name:** 49. Title IV-E Foster Care Parent Training 75% Federal – 25% County

**Service Name:** Foster Care Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Counties can draw federal matching funds for the proper and efficient administration of the State plan at 75% FFP after the application of the foster care eligibility rate (penetration rate) for the training prospective foster parents to provide residential care for children in the custody of a county department of social services. The county is responsible for the remaining 25%. Information about what costs are allowable can be found in Appendix 3.2-Child Welfare Funding and Appendix 3.5 Child Welfare Funding – Foster Care of the Child Welfare Policy Manual.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  75%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  25%

**Citation:**  P.L.93-247

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/appendix-3-2-child-welfare-funding-2.pdf>

<https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/document/appendix-3-5-child-welfare-funding-foster-care/>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 50. Title IV-E Administration Adoption 50% Federal – 50% County**

**Service Name:** Adoption Services

**Brief Program Description:**

Counties can draw federal matching funds at 50% FFP for the proper and efficient administration of the State plan. The county is responsible for the remaining 50%. Information about what costs are allowable can be found in Appendix 3.2-Child Welfare Funding, of the Child Welfare Policy Manual (link provided below).

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  50%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County  50%

**Citation:**  P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171; P.L. 113-183

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program, Child Welfare Funding Manual:** [015 Appendix 3.2 Child Welfare Funding – Child Welfare Funding – NCDHHS Policies and Manuals](#)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name: 51. Title IV-E Adoption Parent Training 75% Federal – 25% County**

**Service Name: Adoption Services**

**Brief Program Description:**

Counties can draw federal matching funds for the proper and efficient administration of the State plan at 75% Federal Financial Participation rate after the application of the IV-E adoption eligibility rate (penetration rate) for training persons and families seeking adoption of children in the custody of a county department of social services. The county is responsible for the remaining 25% after the Federal Financial Participation rate is applied. Information about what costs are allowable can be found in Appendix 3.2 Child Welfare Funding, of the Child Welfare Policy Manual.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 75% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 25%

**Citation:** P.L. 96-272; P.L. 99-514; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-395; P.L. 105-89; P.L. 103-382; P.L. 106-169; P.L. 109-171; P.L. 113-183

**NC General Statute references:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related web links for this program:** <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/appendix-3-2-child-welfare-funding-2.pdf>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 52. Child Support Services (IV-D)**

**Service Name:** Child Support Services

**Brief Program Description:**

**Projected Expenditures**

The estimate of anticipated administrative/services requirements for the operation of the local Child Support (IV-D) programs is \$136,769,048. Federal match for expenditures is 66 percent except those expenditures made with funding incentives, which are not eligible for federal match.

**Other Program Impacts**

**Genetic Testing:**

To ensure compliance with 45 CFR 303.5(c), the State will maintain an umbrella contract with a paternity testing vendor as it has done in the past. Using the State contract, counties will benefit from the negotiated statewide rate. County offices may choose to have individual contracts to perform paternity testing for child support purposes. The current contract expires April 5, 2028.

County offices will continue to be billed directly by the vendor for the cost of testing.

The cost of the genetic testing based on the current contracted rate is:

- Sample collection cost if conducted by LabCorp - \$42.00 per person.
- Sample collection cost if conducted by certified child support staff - \$21.00 per person.

**Incentive Payments:**

Incentive payment estimates for SFY2027 will remain conservative. Advancing payments to local offices for performance measures that have not been validated by the federal Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) increases the risk of overpayments. This disbursement methodology will help reduce the risk of overspending federal receipts.

Estimates for SFY2027 are cautiously optimistic that North Carolina will meet standards for the FFY2026 Data Reliability Audit. Incentives will be penalized if the performance standards are not met in the Data Reliability Audit. Plans are to schedule monthly payments to the extent possible, and then pay a larger settlement based on receipt of the final award letter. The quarter in which the settlement payment is processed will be dependent upon receipt of the award letter. Estimates do not include any potential settlement and the amount paid monthly (October – June) may not necessarily equal 1/9 of the total estimated for the county.

## **IRS Background Investigation:**

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) states that Safeguards must “establish and ensure that background investigation requirements for all agency employees and contractors that have access to Federal Tax Information (FTI) are consistent with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)’s background investigation requirements for access to FTI.”

- Under IRS Publication 1075, agencies with access to FTI must initiate a background investigation for all current and newly hired employees and contractors prior to permitting access to or use of FTI. The requirements include the following:
  - FBI fingerprinting (FD-258) - review of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint results conducted to identify possible suitability issues.
  - Checks at local law enforcement agencies where the subject has lived, worked, and/or attended school within the last 5 years, and if applicable, of the appropriate agency for any identified arrests.
  - Citizenship/residency - Checks conducted on applicants to verify their eligibility to legally work in the United States (e.g., a United States citizen or foreign citizen with the necessary authorization).

**Cost – Estimated at \$24.00 per employee plus any additional fees charged by the agency’s local sheriff’s department for fingerprinting costs associated with background check testing.**

*\*If your county has already completed the initial background checks for current staff with Child Support Program access to FTI, future costs will only occur **once every five years** for those employees and for any new hires.*

*For employees who had background checks during **SFY 2019–2020**, their five-year renewal period began in **SFY 2025–2026**. This means counties should now:*

- *Conduct background checks for **all new employees**, and*
- *Recheck **any existing employees whose last background check was five years ago**.*

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal\_\_ State\_\_\_\_ County\_\_ These expenditures are not eligible for reimbursement. The state pays the initial cost for the background check fee of \$24.00 and bills each agency for the 34% unreimbursed portion of the background check fee. Counties may submit any sheriff’s costs associated with fingerprinting for reimbursement as those costs are negotiated by each agency with their local sheriff’s department. The state does not pay for fingerprinting costs associated with background check testing.

**Citation:** P.L.93-647

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 110 Article 9

**Related web links for this program:** Child Support Services

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation): \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 53. Offset - IV-D Incentive**

**Service Name: Child Support Services**

**Brief Program Description:**

**Incentive Payments**

North Carolina earns incentives based on the program's performance as compared to the other states in the nation. The areas of comparison are Temporary Assistance for Needy Families collections (current, former, and never), paternities established or acknowledged in relation to the number of children born out of wedlock, percent of cases with support orders, percent collected of current support owed, percent of cases with collections toward arrears, and the cost effectiveness of the program. Each quarter, the federal Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) advances to states estimated incentive dollars based on the estimated performance of the states.

Annually, once all states have submitted their performance data, OCSS conducts a Data Reliability Audit report. This Data Reliability Audit determines which areas of the incentive pool of dollars each state is eligible to be considered for an award. If the Data Reliability Audit report concludes that the data is not reliable, then the incentive award is adjusted accordingly. OCSS uses a formula combining the audited performance measures with weights to provide a comparison and calculation of incentive awards for all states and territories which results in a positive or negative award taking into consideration advanced incentive payments made to each state. This settlement is provided in an annual award letter.

North Carolina's Child Support Program mirrors the federal process with the intent to pass down to counties incentive funds paid to the state. Each local office's incentive earnings are based upon their program's performance for the most recent year in comparison to the other local child support offices in the state. Incentive awards are advanced by OCSS quarterly. To the extent possible, state incentive payments are advanced to counties in nine monthly installments between October 2026 and June 2027 for a total of \$7,000,000. County payments will be based on un-audited performance measures as well as fund availability. Once the state receives the annual award letter from OCSS, any positive or negative award is passed to the counties.

Because settlement payments from OCSS are based on performance in relation to other states, it is difficult to predict the total award. Therefore, settlement payments to counties are not budgeted. Under North Carolina Session Law 2015-241, up to fifteen percent of the annual federal incentive payments shall be retained by the North Carolina Child Support Services Section to enhance centralized child support services. These funds will be retained from the final settlement amount.

Incentive funds earned cannot be used to supplant local dollars. OCSS's Action Transmittal 01-04 discusses the reinvestment phase-in process for incentives earned, and the procedure used to determine what is considered the base amount of local dollars invested by the state or county in

their child support program. It can be found at the following internet address: Reinvestment of Child Support Incentive Payments.

The base dollars are calculated by determining the average of FFY 96, 97 and 98 local shares of child support expenditures less the average of FFY 96, 97, and 98 child support incentives earned. Counties' as well as the State's expenditures of incentive dollars are to be monitored to ensure incentives funds earned are used appropriately and in compliance with federal regulations.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes X (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 110 Article 9

**Related web links for this program:**

Reinvestment of Child Support Incentive Payments

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes X (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name: 54. Work First County Block Grant**

**Service Name:** Work First Family Assistance & Work First Employment Services

**Brief Program Description:**

The federal government gives states flexibility in how to use their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds. To provide counties the flexibility needed to provide effective services, state law provides for counties to receive these funds via their Work First County Block Grant.

The Work First County Block Grant (WFCBG) provides counties funding for a number of initiatives, only one of which is employment services for parents receiving a Work First payment. The block grant also provides funding for child welfare services and child care.

Total funds are allocated according to the formula outlined by the General Assembly, which provides funds according to each county's program expenditures in SFY 1995/96 in comparison with statewide program expenditures for SFY 1995/96. As in previous years, all expenditures through the WFCBG will be funded with either 100% TANF dollars or 100% state/county Maintenance of Effort (MOE) dollars. The Division of Social Services has developed instructions to counties to describe the types of services that may be funded from each source.

**Maintenance of Effort:**

Under the State law, the State and Standard Counties must maintain spending at 100% of 1996-97 budgeted amounts for allowable (qualified) activities. Electing Counties have the option of reducing their spending to 90% of 1996-97 budgeted amounts. State law also contains a provision allowing counties to reduce their Maintenance of Effort (MOE) spending if they can demonstrate they are meeting the needs of eligible families. (See 108A-27.12(e); 108A-27.13)

**Child Welfare Services - TANF-Emergency Assistance (TEA):**

Because of the funding tie to the former IV-A Emergency Assistance Program, counties have the capability to use Work First Block Grant funds to fund a number of child welfare services. To avoid potential confusion with Work First program requirements, 100% federal TANF funding and associated eligibility requirements for child welfare services is referred to as "TEA". TANF regulations allow 100% federal funds to be used to provide a broad range of services that were authorized under the state's 1995 approved AFDC-EA program as long as the same eligibility factors exist and are well documented. The primary eligibility requirements for TEA (100% TANF federal) are a child living with a parent or specified relative (or having lived with a parent or specified relative within six months of eligibility determination) and the existence of an emergency situation. Once the child is determined to be eligible for TEA funding, funding for any service under TEA may not last longer than 364 days unless a different crisis occurs. TEA does not replace IV-E eligibility. If a child is IV-E eligible, IV-E funds must be used for all IV-E allowable activities.

TEA funding is available for Child Protective Services (CPS) In-Home Services. The same eligibility requirements for TEA funding exist when such funds are used to provide CPS In-

Home Services. An example of the appropriate use of TEA for CPS In-Home services is when the family is receiving CPS services, but the child is not considered a reasonable candidate for foster care placement. The family may be experiencing difficulties in parenting, but the difficulties are not of such severity as to endanger the child's safety. In such instances, the child would not qualify for IV-E funding because one of the major requirements for IV-E funding for CPS In-Home Services is that the child be a reasonable candidate for foster care placement. The use of TEA to fund CPS In-Home Services is not extensive as most agencies provide services only to those parents who are experiencing severe to intensive parenting problems. Consequently, most CPS In-Home Services families have children who are considered reasonable candidates for foster care placement absent effective preventive efforts by the agency and thus meet the IV-E eligibility requirements. The use of TEA funds for appropriate children in CPS In-Home Services provides agencies with another way to serve families' needs with greater flexibility.

### **Child Welfare Services (MOE):**

County departments of social services may also use their Maintenance-of-Effort (MOE) funds to provide certain specified child welfare services. Eligibility factors are:

- 1) The service must meet the first TANF purpose: "to provide assistance to income-eligible families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives". Workers must document how provision of the MOE funded service meets this TANF purpose,
- 2) The child must be a US citizen or qualified immigrant,
- 3) The child must be living with a parent or specified relative, and
- 4) Family's income cannot be higher than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level for that size family.

MOE funds are available for families receiving CPS Assessment as long as the family meets the MOE eligibility requirements. MOE funds are also available for CPS In-Home Services when the family meets the MOE requirements. The same rationale for use of TEA funding for CPS In-Home Services is the same for MOE funding. In order for MOE funds to pay for CPS In-Home Services, the MOE eligibility requirements must be met and documented. The same rationale for use of MOE for CPS In-Home Services exists for those families who may need CPS services from the agency, but the degree of severity of the problems do not threaten the safety of the child. As with TEA funding for this service, there has not been extensive use of these funds. As such, the child is considered a reasonable candidate for foster care placement and IV-E funding is the mandated funding source for such children.

### **Enhanced Return From Collections:**

Enhanced funding in the Work First Cash Assistance Program for fraud and client error overpayment collections will continue. It will be earned as follows:

- For collections related to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or Work First Cash Assistance payments made *prior to January 1, 1997*, the return is equal to the county's distributive share and one-half of the State's distributive share of the total AFDC or Work First Cash Assistance benefits recovered.

- For collections related to Work First Cash Assistance *paid on or after January 1, 1997*, the return is equal to seventy-five percent (75%) of the total amount recovered.

**Set-Off Debt Collection (State Tax Intercept):**

AFDC/Work First claims will continue to be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Revenue (DOR) electronically by the Enterprise Program Integrity Control System (EPICS). We will continue to refer individuals to DOR when their outstanding delinquent Intentional Program Violation (IPV) and/or Inadvertent Household Error (IHE) claims' balances total \$50.00 or more.

**Note:** After January 2019, AFDC/Work First claims will be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Revenue (DOR) electronically by the NC FAST system.

State law requires, if a refund is applied against an agency debt that results in an over collection, the over collection plus interest is to be refunded to the debtor. If the total intercepted funds must be refunded, the collection assistance fee must also be included in the refund. The State Controller's Office processes these refunds. All claims, except Agency Errors, will continue to be included in the Set-Off Debt Collection Program. DOR will provide an update on the interest rate every 6 months.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  100%  State \_\_\_\_\_ County MOE  100%  (State and County % varies for electing counties)

**Citation:**  P.L.93-247; P.L.111-320

**NC General Statute references:**  G.S. 108A-27.11 AND 27.12; 108A 27.13

**Related web links for this program:**  Work First Program

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program funding and/or expenditures:** N/A

**Program Name: 55. Adult Protective Services – SSBG**

**Service Title: Adult Protective Services**

**Brief Program Description:**

Adult Protective Services is a mandated service that is based on an acute awareness of the vulnerability of adults with disabilities to various forms of maltreatment. North Carolina General Statute 108A was enacted to ensure the protection of disabled adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It is a critical and multifaceted service that includes provisions in law for reporting maltreatment, evaluation of maltreatment, and intervention when protective services are necessary. Adult Protective Services is diverse by nature and deals with persons of varying age, disability, culture, ethnicity, religious preference, and economic backgrounds. Adult Protective Services preserves the rights of the adult to make their own choices and consideration of that ethical responsibility is essential.

Adults who have a disability and who are abused, neglected, or exploited or suspected of being abused, neglected, or exploited, can get help from Adult Protective Services (APS) from the local county department of social services (DSS). Funds are allocated from the Social Services Block grant (SSBG) and replace state appropriations which have been eliminated from the DHHS budget. This appropriation shall be distributed to the counties currently receiving funding.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  (100% county funds once allocation is spent) No

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal: 75% State: County: 25%

**NC General Statute references:** S.L. 1999-2000 and G.S. 108A, Article 6

**Related web links for this program:** [http://www.ncdhhs.gov/aging/adultsvcs/afs\\_aps.htm](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/aging/adultsvcs/afs_aps.htm)

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  No  (if no, give brief explanation)

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**B. DIVISION OF AGING**

**Program Name: 56. Adult Day Care Federal and State**

**Service Title: Home and Community Based Services**

**Brief Program Description:**

The State Adult Day Care Fund is authorized by the General Assembly for county departments of social services to purchase adult day care and adult day health care services from certified adult day services providers for at-risk adults, age 18 and over.

S.L. 2021-180 changed G.S. 143B-181.1 to require reimbursement rates for adult day services, adult day health services, and associated transportation services paid under the Home and Community Care Block Grant and the State Adult Day Care Fund to be established at the local level to reflect geographical differences, the availability of services, the cost to provide services, and other local variables. In addition, S.L. 2023-65 removed the authority of the Social Services Commission under G.S. 143B-153 to set maximum rates for adult day care services, adult day health services and associated transportation. Reimbursement rates will now be set at the local level by the county department of social services or a designee of the board of county commissioners, to allow flexibility in responding to local variables.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes   X   (100% county funds once allocation is spent)  
No       

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  47.47%  State  40.03%  County  12.50% 

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:** Session Law 1981-82, Chapter 1048; Session Law 2021-180; G.S. 143B-181.1; G.S. 143B-153 Session Law 2023- 65

**Related web links for this program:**

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/aging-and-adult-services/adult-day-services>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes   X   (receive ongoing) No        (If no, give brief explanation:)

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 57. State In-Home Services Fund**

**Service Name: Home and Community Services**

**Brief Program Description:**

The State In-Home Services Fund provides for in-home services, adult day services, home improvement services and preparation and delivery of meals for at-risk adults, age 18-59.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (100% county funds once allocation is spent) No \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  87.50%  State  0%  County  12.50%

**Citation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NC General Statute references:**  SL 1979-80

**Related web links for this program:**

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/county-staff-information/budget-information/budget-estimates/county-budget-estimates-2023-2024>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation:)

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**Program Name: 58. Adult Homes Specialist**

**Service Name: Adult Home Specialist Fund**

**Brief Program Description:**

The State Adult Home Specialist Fund was established by the General Assembly in SB-10 during the 1999 Session. State funds were allocated to social services agencies where adult care home beds are located. County allocations are based on the number of G.S. 131D-2 adult care homes in each county as a proportion of the total number of homes statewide. These funds are intended to allow staff to increase the amount of time spent monitoring adult care homes for compliance with licensure regulations.

These funds may be used to create new adult home specialist positions in a county department of social services or to increase the full-time equivalency of an existing adult home specialist position. The Fund may also be used to upgrade and pay for salary increases to adult home specialist positions re-classified from Social Worker II to Social Worker III.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes  X  (50% Federal & 50% County funds once State share allocation is spent)  
No  \_\_\_\_\_

**Percent Reimbursement:** Federal  50%  State  25%  County  25%

**Citation:**

**NC General Statute references:**  SL 1999-2000 (Senate Bill 10)

**Related web links for this program:**  https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/adult-care-homes

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No  \_\_\_\_\_  (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:** N/A

**C. DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING**

**Program Name: 59. Food and Nutrition - Employment & Training**

**Service Name: More Than A Job NC Program**

**Brief Program Description:**

The Food and Nutrition Services Employment and Training (FNS E&T) also known as More Than A Job NC, is a key component of North Carolina’s workforce development system. The program serves FNS recipients and employers by providing opportunities in self-selected counties to support financial independence through personal responsibility and gainful employment.

More Than A Job NC engages FNS recipients in meaningful, work-related activities that lead to paid employment. Participation in the program is voluntary for both counties and FNS recipients.

The Division of Child and Family Well-being oversees More Than A Job NC at the State level, while counties administer program services and receive federal funding ranging from 50% to 100%, based on funding availability. The State contracts with the NC Community College System to provide education navigation services to program participants.

At the local level, participating county DSS agencies refer voluntary More Than A Job participants to Community Based Organizations and/or the Community College for education, job skills training, and subsequent employment opportunities.

**Capped Allocation:** Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No  X

**Percent Reimbursement:** (1) FNS E&T staff—Federal 50% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 50%;  
Selected Counties receive time limited Federal 100% State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_;

(2) Reimbursements to volunteer participants—Federal 50% State \_\_\_\_\_ County 50%

**Citation:** P.L.110 246a

**NC General Statute references:** G.S. 108A 51s

**Related web links for this program:** <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/morethanajobnc>

**Funds recurring into future years:** Yes  X  (receive ongoing) No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, give brief explanation):

**Brief reason for projected increase/decrease in program costs:**

Project an increase in the overall cost of the More Than A Job Program in NC due to the statewide expansion of More Than A Job to all counties. The cost is based on the number of FNS E&T Counties and recipient volunteers participating in the program. Expanded ABAWD work requirements for individuals ages 55-64 and narrowed exemptions for households with children ages 14-17 (effective December 1, 2025) will also increase referrals and utilization of More Than A Job NC to help North Carolinian's achieve self-sufficiency through work opportunities.