



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

January 15, 2026

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,  
SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

**SUBJECT: ACF NOTIFICATION REGARDING USE OF SOCIAL SECURITY SURVIVOR BENEFITS**

**PURPOSE/BACKGROUND: SURVEY OF CURRENT NC COUNTY PRACTICES REGARDING USE OF  
SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME AND SOCIAL SECURITY SURVIVOR BENEFITS**

**REQUIRED ACTION:** ☐ Information Only ☒ **Time Sensitive** ☐ Immediate

Last month, the US DHHS [Administration for Children and Families \(ACF\)](#) sent a letter to 39 US Governors, including NC Governor Josh Stein, informing states of the Administration's priority to end the practice of diverting the federal survivor benefits of children in foster care to cover their cost of foster care. The letter stipulates that should a state decide to enact reforms that conserve benefits for foster children's future needs, ACF is prepared to offer technical assistance.

In response to this letter, NCDHHS DSS is requesting information from NC county child welfare agencies to conduct a comprehensive review of current practices related to the use of Social Security benefits. Each county DSS Director, or their designee, should complete the following two surveys on or before **Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>**.

1. [County Practices on Social Security - Survivor Benefits](#)
2. [County Practices on Supplemental Security Income - Disability Benefits](#)

Please contact your Regional Child Welfare Specialist with any questions.

Sincerely,

**Adrian W. Daye, MSW**

Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice

Division of Social Services, Child Welfare

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

LOCATION: 1915 Health Services Way, Raleigh, NC 27607

MAILING ADDRESS: 2410 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2410

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6404 • FAX: 919-733-3052

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Cc: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult Regional Support  
Donna Fayko, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Operations  
William "Ben" Rose, Lead Regional Director  
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety  
Heather McAllister, Section Chief for Child and Family Services  
Meredith Houchins, Interim Section Chief for County Operations

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