



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

August 7, 2025

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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

**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY SHELTER CARE ADMISSION – REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

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

North Carolina Department of Social Services, Division of Social Services (NCDHHS DSS) acknowledges the existing challenges in finding appropriate residential treatment placements for children in DSS custody with complex behavioral health needs. To reduce the number of children waiting in inappropriate placements, such as emergency departments and DSS offices, NC DHHS DSS is refining the requirements for documentation at the time of admission to emergency shelter care facilities.

North Carolina Administrative Code defines emergency shelter care as “24-hour care provided in a residential child-care facility for a period not to exceed 90 days, in accordance with 10A NCAC 70J .0200”. These placements are intended to be short-term while more appropriate placement is secured. This is not intended for placement in a licensed foster home and/or adoptive home.

It is **mandatory** for the documents below to be provided by the county DSS prior to admission. **Failure to provide the required documentation can result in a negative licensing action against the DSS licensed emergency shelter care facility up to and including revocation of the agency’s license.**

The required documentation is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the child or youth while placed in the emergency shelter. **The following only applies to emergency shelter care facilities:**

- Application
- Legal documents (court disposition/DSS verification)
- Immunizations (within two weeks of admissions)
- Medication orders/MARS
- Mental health evaluation
- Signed visitation/contact plan
- Consents for release of information
- Emergency information
- Authorization to administer non-prescription medications
- Signed agreement (expectations and responsibilities)

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

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC  
27603 MAILING ADDRESS: 2401 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC  
27699-2401 www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6404 • FAX: 919-733-3052

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Attached you will find the *Emergency Shelter Care Admission Checklist* for required documents. For a list of all DSS licensed facilities, please use the following hyperlink [Agency Listings](#).

For questions, please contact Adoptions Manager/Interim Private Agency Licensing Manager, Mary Mackins at [mary.mackins@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:mary.mackins@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

*Kimaree Sanders*

Kimaree Sanders, MSW, MPA  
Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing  
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Cc: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult, Regional Support  
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice  
Donna Fayko, Deputy Director for County Operations  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety  
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations  
Heather McAllister, Section Chief for Child and Family Services

Attachment:  
EMERGENCY SHELTER CARE ADMISSION CHECKLIST

CWS-55-2025

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