



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

September 17, 2026

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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

SUBJECT: UPDATED RAPID RESPONSE TEAM SERVICENOW GOVERNMENT PORTAL LINK

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Information Only ☐ Time Sensitive ☐ Action Required

PURPOSE: This notice informs county departments of social services that the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), Division of Social Services (DSS), has updated the Rapid Response Team (RRT) policy within the Permanency Planning Manual.

The updated policy provides county child welfare agencies with guidance regarding the purpose and role of the Rapid Response Team, criteria for referrals, expectations for county and system partner collaboration prior to referral, and the process for requesting RRT support.

The RRT is an NCDHHS cross-divisional team that meets every weekday to address immediate needs for children in DSS custody who require placement at the medically necessary level of care. The RRT works to remove barriers created by systemic issues and facilitate problem-solving and challenging conversations among county DSS, Medicaid Health Plans, and other child-serving stakeholders.

The updated Rapid Response Team policy can be accessed in the Permanency Planning Manuals at the following links:

[Permanency Planning Manual \(PATH NC\)](#)

[Permanency Planning Manual_Non-PATH NC](#)

County child welfare agencies are encouraged to review the updated policy and ensure appropriate program administrators, managers, supervisors, and social workers are familiar with the RRT referral criteria, process, and expectations outlined within the policy.

For further information, please contact Larissa Berger, NCDHHS DSS Children's Health and Development Coordinator, at Larissa.Spell-Berger@dhhs.nc.gov.

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

LOCATION: 1915 Health Services Way, Raleigh NC 27607

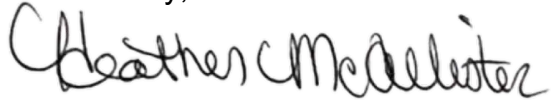
MAILING ADDRESS: 2408 Mail Service Center

Raleigh NC 27699-2410

www.ncdhhs.gov • Main Tel. 919-527-6340

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather McAllister". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather McAllister, MSW, LCSW, LCAS, CBIS
Section Chief for Well-Being
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
NC Department of Health and Human Services

CC: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult Regional Support
Donna Fayko, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Services
William "Ben" Rose, Lead Regional Director
Adrian Daye, Section Chief for Permanency
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety
Meredith Houchins, Interim Section Chief for County Operations
Crystalle Williams, Section Chief for Workforce and Staff Development

CWS-68-2026