



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY KINSLEY • Secretary

JOYCE MASSEY-SMITH, MPA

Director, Division of Aging and Adult Services

February 28, 2023

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: SPECIAL ASSISTANCE AND ADULT SERVICES SUPERVISORS, PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, AND PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH) Obsolescence of Adjusted Payments and Elimination of Economic Assessment

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

As enacted by statute in North Carolina Session Law 2021-180 and in Session Law 2022-74, effective January 1, 2023, the standard amount of Special Assistance In-Home (SAIH) payment is the same as it would be if the applicant or beneficiary were in an adult care home. The SAIH program will accept the applicant or beneficiary statement that the standard payment amount (the full amount a SAIH a/b is eligible for) is needed to meet all of the necessary expenses of safely remaining at home.

This change in statute means that SAIH applicants and beneficiaries will no longer receive an Adult Services economic assessment, thus negating the use of SAIH Adjusted Payments or use of Adjusted Payment evidence in NC FAST. This is applicable immediately and affects both SAIH cases and SAIH/TCL cases.

- Statutes and SAIH policy continue to require that a SAIH a/b would seek placement in an adult care home or special care unit if not for the State-County Special Assistance In-Home Program.
- Statutes and SAIH policy also continue to require that a SAIH a/b require domiciliary level of care, as designated on a valid FL-2.

SAIH policy is being updated to indicate this change and a related Change Notice will be issued.

This letter outlines related SAIH budgeting changes, the automated process to be executed by NC FAST, and how to handle the SAIH mass change update in NC FAST. **This SAIH adjusted payment mass change is projected to occur in NC FAST on the evening of February 28, 2023.**

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

LOCATION: 693 Palmer Drive, Taylor Hall, Raleigh, NC 27603
MAILING ADDRESS: 2101 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2101
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-855-3400 • FAX: 919-733-0443

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

NC FAST AUTOMATED ADJUSTED PAYMENT OBSOLETION MASS CHANGE OVERVIEW

1. As part of this adjusted payment mass change update in NC FAST, Adjusted Payment Evidence on impacted cases will be system end-dated 12/31/2022, and the system reassessed. As part of this reassessment, NC FAST will recalculate all previously generated SAIH payments using the maximum payment amount the individual was eligible for, both ongoing and retroactively back to January 1, 2023, as applicable. This reassessment will generate a changed decision.
2. NC FAST will automatically accept the changed decision, create an underpayment case if applicable, and auto-approve all underpayment cases created because of the Adjusted Payment obsolescence mass change retroactively back to January 1, 2023, as appropriate. This applies to all cases without an "exception" (as defined below). Changed decisions for cases with an "exception" remain in "On Hold" status.

Exceptions are defined as:

- ❖ Decisions that were already in "On Hold" status prior to Adjusted Payment updates
- ❖ Decisions identified with a change caused by something other than the update
- ❖ Other evidence updates on the case which contributed to the change

3. **Process for case decisions "On Hold"** - A case decision cannot be automatically accepted by NC FAST if the case has a decision "On Hold". (Any such cases should appear on the "On Hold Cases Report" mentioned below in #4.) These cases will require the following actions by the Income Maintenance Caseworker (IMC):
 - Review the case to determine the reason for the "On Hold" status
 - Continue processing the decision
 - Accept the correct, updated decision
 - Approve the resulting underpayment case

4. **Notices** - NC FAST will auto-issue an Adequate DSS-8110 notice on the SAIH cases with changed decisions that were automatically accepted by the system.

For cases with a decision "On Hold" that requires being worked manually and approved by the IMC, a manual adequate DSS-8110 notice must be sent by the IMC.

5. **Reports** – two required reports will be provided to county IMCs by NC FAST:

Obsoleted SAIH Adjusted Payment Evidence Exceptions Case Report – Report identifies the exception/on hold Special Assistance In-Home cases that could not have the changed decisions automatically accepted by NC FAST. Caseworkers will need to use this report to review "On Hold" changed decisions and take appropriate action. DSS-8110 adequate notices will need to be manually completed by caseworkers for these.

Obsoleted SAIH Adjusted Payment Evidence Processed Case Report - Report identifies the Special Assistance In-Home cases where the cases had a system accepted changed decision, underpayments were created which were system approved and issued.

6. NC FAST will issue a communication to alert counties that the obsolescence of SAIH Adjusted Payments mass change has been executed in the system, and when the above referenced reports will be available in FAST Help.
7. **Beginning April 2023 and forward, SAIH cases will issue the maximum payment.**

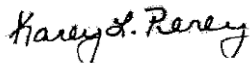
8. The above referenced reports, including manual work on exception cases and any related case corrections are to be completed as soon as possible, with a deadline for completion of April 30, 2023.
9. As a reminder, changes to any SAIH recipient's benefit payments must be reported to Adult Services Case Managers via the DAAS-0031 SAIH Program Interagency Transmittal Form.

OBSOLETE ADJUSTED PAYMENT RESERVE EXCLUSION

The underpayment case amounts issued from January 2023 through March 2023 that occur as a result of this obsolescence of Adjusted Payments are to be *excluded from the individual's SA/SAIH reserve for up to 9 months* (or until those funds are spent by the recipient, whichever occurs first). Caseworkers should document an individual's total underpayment amounts in case notes as a reminder of this time limited exclusion.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the Special Assistance listserv at specialassistance@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



Karey Perez
Adult Services Section Chief
Division of Aging and Adult Services

KP/tg/wb

DAAS_AS_05