



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Social Services

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

CARLA WEST • Division Director, Human Services

April 22, 2024

Dear County Manager and County Director of Social Services:

Session Law 2017-41 requires all counties to enter into an annual written agreement, referred to as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) for all social services programs excluding medical assistance (Medicaid). State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018-2019 was the first year of these agreements.

Since March 2020 COVID-19 has had an impact on our daily business. In 2020 the leadership in NCDHHS made the decision to not issue formal corrective actions relating to MOU performance for SFY 2019-2020. We know that the focus of all work was to provide services to the families of North Carolina, and you continued to commit to meeting the needs in your communities, because of that NCDHHS chose to not issue a new MOU for SFY 2020-2021 but continued to work with counties to improve performance and meet or exceed the standards that were outlined. A MOU was issued with an effective date of January 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, and June 30, 2022 through June 30, 2024. In an effort to allow each county to remain focused on providing the best possible services to the families in North Carolina, NCDHHS again chose not to issue formal corrective actions relating to MOU performance for the period of January 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024. The MOU effective January 1, 2021, also formalized the ongoing criteria for implementing a pause in issuing Corrective or Development Plans that NCDHHS would follow.

This letter provides an overview of the MOU process for SFY 2024-2025 and SFY 2025-2026.

The Department worked jointly with the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services to vet all measures prior to the finalization for the upcoming MOU, which remains the same as the most recent MOU. Attached you will find the MOU with an effective date of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026. The measures for the SFY 2024-2025 and SFY 2025-2026 MOU can be found in **Attachment I** entitled Mandated Performance Requirements. **These are the only measures that will be evaluated as part of the MOU for SFY 2024-2025 and SFY 2025-2026 and are subject to performance improvement actions.**

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

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Attachment II includes information concerning the upcoming Child and Family Services Review Round IV and the measures that will be reviewed by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and **will not be included in any corrective action**. Ongoing monitoring and support activities will continue as they have in prior years for these measures. We will continue to develop reports and validate data for these remaining performance measures. As always, we will work with the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services and counties to assist with the data validation process.

The goal of this work is not intended in any way to be punitive. NCDHHS will work collaboratively with counties that are having difficulty consistently meeting the measures and provide support using a Continuous Quality Improvement framework.

COVID-19 changed our world and had a tremendous impact on the work of human services. We recognize that you experienced significant increases in requests for the safety net services you provide. We also recognize that through Medicaid unwinding, Medicaid Expansion, Tailored Plans, and workforce shortages, there continues to be barriers that are difficult to overcome in meeting the performance measures outlined in the SFY 2024-2025 and SFY 2025-2026 MOU.

Based on the conditions established in 2019, NCDHHS has determined that the barriers that counties are currently facing meet the criteria for a pause in issuing corrective or development plans. This pause will give counties time to establish procedures to meet the barriers outlined in the previous paragraph. The pause will be reevaluated in December of 2024. In the future, NCDHHS will consider a pause on issuing a corrective action or development plan on a county-by-county basis if there are barriers outside the control of the county that has a significant impact on the counties ability to meet their performance requirements (i.e., a significant hurricane, tornado, etc.). While we will continue to monitor performance and share data with you and provide your team support, if the pause is in place there will be no formal performance improvement or corrective actions taken related to MOU performance. We will also hold off publishing the Rylan's Law Dashboard to the public at this time.

Several items are included with this letter for your review and information:

- Memorandum of Understanding for SFY 2024-2025 – SFY 2025-2026
- Addendum A – Data Sharing Memorandum of Agreement
- Attachment I - MOU Performance Measures At-A-Glance
- Attachment II - Child Welfare Performance Measures At-A-Glance
- Fact Sheets for each program area that provide information on the measures

Please take the steps below and return signed agreements to Carla West (carla.west@dhhs.nc.gov) and Danielle Upchurch (Danielle.upchurch@dhhs.nc.gov) no later than June 30, 2024.

1. On page 6 please add the name and contact person to whom information and notices regarding this agreement should be sent.
2. On page 10 submit this document for signature to the person who the county designates as the signature authority. In case the county elects to have the document co-signed by county leadership and the Department of Social Services director, two spaces for signatures have been provided.
3. On page 9 of Addendum A: Data Sharing Agreement please add the name and contact person who will be designated as the point of contact for data sharing/security.
4. Once we receive your returned, signed copy of the MOU it will be submitted to Secretary Kody Kinsley for signature and a signed copy will be returned for your records.

Please note that any signing statement, resolution or other documentation that a County may return to NCDHHS along with a signed MOU will be deemed separate from the MOU and not incorporated as a part of the MOU. If any documentation is physically affixed to the signed MOU, NCDHHS may return the MOU to be signed without any affixed documentation. NCDHHS will review and retain any submissions received from a County and follow up with a County as needed.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership with us in serving North Carolina's citizens with critical services. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Carla West
Division Director, Human Services
Child Support, Economic Services, Aging and Operations

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