NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for Human Services

Dear County Directors of Social Services

Date: September 28, 2020

Attention: Work First Program Administrators, Managers and Supervisors

Subject: Telephonic Signature for the Work First Program and Services

Priority: Information and Action

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

North Carolina continues to seek ways to streamline policy and procedures to assist as many households as possible in the most efficient ways. Currently clients can apply for assistance in the Work First Program or Services by telephone. Accepting telephonic signatures will reduce the processing time for Work First Program and Services applications and/or recertifications.

A telephonic signature is a type of electronic signature that uses an individual's verbal attestation in place of an ink signature. Accepting telephonic signatures will also provide workers with more flexibility to receive and process applications and/or recertifications while continuing to promote social distancing.

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance on the use of telephonic signatures for the Work First Program and Services.

II. POLICY PROCEDURES

Case managers will continue to follow the policy guidance of DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 3-2020: Work First Interview Process During a Federal or State Declared Natural Disaster or Emergency (Amended) regarding:

- Short-term Services and Benefits Work First Manual Section 102
- Cash Assistance Application Process and Procedures Work First Manual Section 104
- Cash Assistance Recertification Process and Procedures Work First Manual Section 201
- Work Requirements and Services Work First Manual Section 118

However, a telephonic signature can be accepted in lieu of an ink signature on the required forms and paperwork.

Once the phone interview has been successfully completed, review and summarize the information to which the applicant agrees. Document on the signature line of all required paperwork and forms: the applicant's name, date, and time of the telephone call.

The completed DSS-8228 will serve as the summary of the information and client's responses indicating agreement or disagreement for Work First Applications and Recertifications.

III. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Documentation must be thoroughly recorded in NC FAST. The case manager must take specific actions in NC FAST to document and meet reporting requirements.

- For applications, document in NC FAST "Telephone Signature" in the Income Support Application➔Administration Tab➔Notes.
- For recertifications, document in NC FAST "Telephone Signature" in the Product Delivery Case ➔Case Details Tab➔Notes.
- For Work First Employment Services updates, document in NC FAST "Telephone Signature" in the Income Support➔Case Details Tab➔Notes
- The notation must be a "stand alone" notation.

The telephone interview must cover all the information required for completion of the application, recertification, outcome plan or services required paperwork for the action being taken on the case. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements for ongoing Work First cash assistance or short-term benefits and services.

This policy is effective upon receipt. Please email any questions regarding this policy to the DHHS Operational Support Team (OST): DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services

DL/lmd

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