

FNS, Energy, and Work First July Regional Question and Answer

FNS	Question	Can you speak to the new requirements for ADTCs beginning next year? We rec'd info from ours here in Buncombe County that the process is changing significantly.
		Thank you for your question, Marjorie. We will research this question and provide a response in the Q&A document for this webinar.
FNS	Question	Can Thomas & Company, a wage verification service, T&Cverify.com, be used for wages?
		This would be at the county's discretion.
FNS	Question	Companies who use TWN will typically not give us wages or termination information over the phone, they pay TWN service to take this off of their local employees, and they tell us to look it up there. The limitations on running TWN, could they change? Could this possibly change considering that the state is going to be charged based on our payment error rate?
	Answer	There have been no changes at this time to the requirements for requesting TWN. If the employer is on TWN and the client requests assistance in getting wages (this would be covered during the interview), the county can request TWN. If you are unsure when and if you should run TWN, please reach out to your CQIS for further clarification.
FNS	Question	There was communication that came out stating that you must run TWN before denying an application is this still accurate?
	Answer	Yes, if the employer participates in The Work Number, the county should request verification before denying the case for failure to provide.
FNS	Question	Sometimes the Work Number states "active" and the client says they are not employed. What are the next steps?
	Answer	Attempt to contact the employer. If the employer will not provide information, view the pay history on the TWN, sometimes the status shows active, but the pay history shows the applicant has not received a pay. Request verification from applicant of verification of last day worked and last pay. Use prudent person concept and document the case regarding how you determined terminated income. If worker suspects applicant misrepresented their work status, make a referral to PI.
FNS	Question	For recertifications, if we see previous quarter wages in ESCWS but the client reports no income in the base period, do we request verification?
	Answer	You would not request wages if the income does not fall within base period. If the worker sees that wages were reported in ESCWS and could potentially fall in the base period, the worker would need to ask the applicant when they last worked. If it does not fall within the base period perimeter, the worker would not need to request those wages. If the worker suspects the applicant has misrepresented themselves, a referral to PI should be sent.
FNS	Question	Do we run TWN on expedited cases?

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	Answer	If the employer is a TWN participant and the client reports working for that employer during the base period, yes TWN should be requested, if not, then no.
FNS	Question	What would be the correct documentation for not using the base period?
	Answer	Documentation that explains why base period is determined not to be representative. For example, base period wages show no pay for one week due to applicant being out of work for the flu, this pay period would not be representative of ongoing pay and would need to be excluded. Make sure to document was caused the wages in base period to not be deemed representative of ongoing pay.
FNS	Question	When it comes to the FNS Base Periods when she mentioned Application, does she also mean the same for Recertification? If client states they have not worked since may 2025, but they have qtr 1 income, at recert we take their statement, document and do not request verification of that income since may 2025 would not be in my base period right now.
	Answer	Base periods apply to both applications and recertifications. If a hit appears on ESCWS for a quarter that falls within the base period, this would need to be addressed with the applicant. If the applicant states that the income terminated prior to base period, document the case and no verification is required. If the worker suspects that the applicant misrepresented themselves during the application or recertification, please refer the case to PI.
FNS	Question	Regarding the ADTC list, is an email from the AR enough or does the list need to be physically signed?
	Answer	If the email sent from the AR contains an email signature, this would be acceptable.
FNS	Question	Are you stating that these documents serve as verification of enumeration and proof of the ss# is not required or do we allow this to serve as verification that the ss# has been applied for and we still should request proof of the ss#?
	Answer	The refugee travel documents serve as proof that enumeration has been requested. This can be accepted at initial application and the SSN would need to be provided at the next recertification unless good cause can be established.
FNS	Question	What if a client states their income ended for application prior to the base period, but they are not being honest and are processed as ER in error, if we do not run TWN for this the agency would not be at fault?
	Answer	This would consist of good interviewing skills; however, in this scenario it would need to be a PI referral if it is suspected that an applicant misrepresented themselves to receive government assistance.
FNS	Question	Is there a link to search for employers before we run the Work number?

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	Answer	If this link does not work, you may need to contact your IT department, it may be agency filters that are preventing you from accessing this website. https://secure.theworknumber.talx.com/twneer/PreAuthenticated/FindEmployer.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2ftwneer%2f
FNS	Question	In FNS when we use I-94 it always ask for alternative ID
	Answer	Thank you for this information. If the system is not function as intended, please submit a helpdesk ticket.
FNS	Question	Work number web address to search employers.
	Answer	If this link does not work, you may need to contact your IT department, it may be agency filters that are preventing you from accessing this website. https://secure.theworknumber.talx.com/twneer/PreAuthenticated/FindEmployer.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2ftwneer%2f
FNS	Question	The work number find my employer website has been unavailable. Do you have an updated website?
	Answer	This is the website to search an employer. You must use this web address or it will not work. I tried this website today to verify it is a working address. https://secure.theworknumber.talx.com/twneer/PreAuthenticated/FindEmployer.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2ftwneer%2f
FNS	Question	This link appears to work for us:
	Answer	https://secure.eeservices.equifax.com/ewswweb/auth/employersearchopen
FNS	Question	Was the weekly 95% for Energy or FNS
	Answer	FNS
FNS	Question	Just curious.. Have you all received any updates regarding the changes coming for FNS due to the Big Beautiful Bill?
	Answer	This was forwarded to DCFW and a communication is forthcoming.
FNS	Question	What if the client does not report income but escws shows recent qauarter wages? are case workers able to pull TWN then?
	Answer	The worker would need to address the recent quarter wages with the applicant/recipient to determine if the income is still active, or when the income terminated. If the applicant reports that the income falls within base period TWN can be requested. Please document the case accordingly.
WF	Question	For scenario 2 in the PPT, the child returned to the hh. Do we re-add the evidence with the new date of return?
	Answer	Yes, if the child returned to the household the case manager should add new living arrangement with a July start date.

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WF	Question	This might be a silly question. For scenario 3, why would we change residency instead of the living with evidence? What are the main differences? Seems like they both indicate either being in the home or not.
	Answer	For this specific scenario, the client moved out of the state which is why the residency evidence was updated. In general, the differences are specific to the situation. When a participant moves out of the household but remains in the state only the living arrangement evidence should be end dated as the residency within the state remains unchanged.
WF	Question	Question scenario 3. The family would still get a payment for 10/24?
	Answer	Yes, the family would need a timely notice for the change in circumstance.
Refugee	Question	Are you stating that these documents serve as verification of enumeration and proof of the ss# is not required or do we allow this to serve as verification that the ss# has been applied for and we still should request proof of the ss#?
	Answer	Clients presenting a Lawful Permanent Resident (Green) Card or an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will need to provide their Social Security card or number to the case manager. The Travel Document, issued by the Transportation Company and Transportation Security Administration, includes the following important statement: "An airline or airport security agency may accept this letter as assurance that the above-named alien(s) may be transported to and within the United States without liability under section 273(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. This letter also serves to confirm that the above-named individual(s) applied for a Security Number(s) via I-765 as of the date of entry to the United States." Case managers must emphasize to clients the importance of submitting their Social Security card to their local Department of Social Services (DSS) as soon as they receive it in the mail.
Energy	Question	Are there any updates on the status of funding. Per the Big Beautiful Bill LIHEAP was not funded.
	Answer	The budget has not passed yet. We are watching the federal budget very closely and will provide information regarding funding when it becomes available.
Energy	Question	Would you have to pay the whole past due amt on a payment plan or just the payment for that month?
	Answer	The amount that is needed to prevent the Energy Crisis. If only the payment for that month is needed to prevent them from defaulting on the payment plan, the monthly payment would need to be paid. If the household has already defaulted on their payment plan and the entire amount must be paid, that amount can be paid if it is within the maximum benefit amount allowed for CIP.
Energy	Question	What's the process when CIP apps aren't transferred within one business day? There are counties that will reject an app if it's not sent within one business day.

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	Answer	Because a CIP case must be processed in the county where the applicant resides, the receiving county cannot reject an application. If a county is having issues with a county transferring an application untimely, or a county refusing to accept an application for an applicant that resides in the county, please contact your CQIS.
Energy	Question	When clients are on a payment plan, the amount that's needed to prevent the crisis includes the payment plan payment for that month with the current charges. We would pay the total bill payment if the provider says this prevents the crisis?
	Answer	The county would pay the amount that is needed to prevent the crisis. If the provider states that the payment plan payment for that month along with the current charges are what is needed to prevent the plan from defaulting and the applicant from owing the entire balance leading to disconnection, that is the amount that should be paid. If the applicant has defaulted on the plan and the entire amount is due to prevent disconnection of service, if the applicant has the available CIP funds to pay the amount owed, the entire balance can be paid. If the applicant does not have the available funds to pay the amount due, the county must request the applicant to pay the amount that exceeds the available CIP balance, before CIP funds can be paid to the provider.
Energy	Question	Just to clarify, if an account is currently on budget billing with a bill due on the 15th, they come in for assistance on the 17th, we can assist since it's past due even though they are still on the budget billing plan?
	Answer	Correct. The only requirement is that the applicant have a past due balance.
Energy	Question	What are the repercussions or accountability if a county does not transfer a case within one business day? We have to accept the application and process, but is there any accountability to ensure counties do what they are supposed to do?
	Answer	If a county consistently transfers applications beyond the required 1 business day, please report these incidents to your CQIS. Further accountability measures are being discussed.
Energy	Question	The CIP denial notice does not address "if funding is available" at least one from our county generated yesterday did not. We have had clients upset thinking they are entitled to the amount on the letter. It says "you may be potential to receive if applied by June 30, 2026"
	Answer	The change adding the language "if funding is available in your county" was implemented on 7/27/2025. Any notices prior to that did not include this language.
Energy	Question	Why do current DSS-8107 show the maximum available to clients? Some applicants consider this balance to be an entitlement, something that we may have denied them
	Answer	This was an ACF requirement.
Energy	Question	With payment plans, do we have to wait until they default and pay the whole amount due or do we pay the one payment to keep them from defaulting on the plan?

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	Answer	The worker would need to reach out to the vendor to determine what amount is needed to prevent the plan from defaulting, requiring the applicant to be responsible for the entire past due balance. This will vary from vendor to vendor and applicant to applicant.
Energy	Question	Regarding CIP base period, can we use paystubs that were provided month before application if client states it's current and representative? or do we have to send wage verification form for anticipated wages?
	Answer	It is acceptable to use the pay stubs from the previous month if the applicant states they are representative of anticipated income for the month of application. Please make sure to document the case accordingly.
Energy	Question	Energy Question about Resources vs. DMV. Scenario. Household=1. DMV is reporting 2 active cars for this individual over the \$3,000 each of them. Do we have to count one of the car as resource?
	Answer	Vehicles are not a countable resource.
Energy	Question	We get transfer case that are over due. What are we supposed to do?
	Answer	Contact your CQIS so that this can be addressed with the sending county.
Energy	Question	if someone just started a job and received 3 day check stub, and continue to be employed. are we supposed to calculate future income?
	Answer	Yes, you would calculate actual income received in the month of application for CIP and any anticipated income to be received in the month of application for CIP. For example, if the individual works at Walmart and is paid biweekly on Thursdays and they apply on July 15 and they received their first pay on July 10 for 3 days. The applicant states that this pay only included 3 days; however, they will be working 40 hrs a week. Their next pay will be on July 24th and this will be a full pay. The worker would calculate the applicants 40 hrs a week times the rate of pay and multiply that by 2 to get what the July 24th check would be and add that with the total pay that was received on July 10th and that would give you the actual plus anticipated wages for the month of application. Please make sure to document what was done and why in case notes.
Energy	Question	If client is under payment plan/past due remaining balance is \$850.00 client needs to make a payment, before we can assist the client.
	Answer	If the client is under a payment program and has defaulted on the payment plan and now must pay the entire balance of \$850 to prevent disconnection, then yes, the applicant would need to pay the amount that exceeds what is available to them in CIP funds before any CIP funds can be approved and paid on the applicant's behalf.
Energy	Question	What amount should we do the installment plan for the application?
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question to the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov

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Energy	Question	Once an installment plan is set up there is no disconnect notice. so are we looking at what the previous disconnect amount was?
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov . It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer to payment plan "what if" questions because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	Resources- is the \$4500 per person or everyone in the HH?
	Answer	The resource limit is per household.
Energy	Question	Date of application is 07/22, client is under payemnt plan/past due balance the total remaining balance is \$850.00, the first instalment plan is due on 08/01, for \$250.00 we only pay the \$250.00 right?
	Answer	If \$250.00 is all that is needed to prevent the household from defaulting on their payment plan and having to pay the entire past due balance, yes, you would only pay the amount required to prevent the household from defaulting.
Energy	Question	For the installment plans for CIP -- would the amount that would be considered the "past due" amount be the monthly installment charge, or the total plan balance?
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov . It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer to payment plan "what if" questions because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	For the installment plan payment scenario just discussed -- if there is not an amount needed to prevent disconnection, and their monthly amount is \$200 but total past due amount is \$500, would we only pay the \$200 since that is the min amount they are required to pay to not be in crisis?
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov . It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer to payment plan "what if" questions because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	I'm sorry, I need you to repeat what you are saying about "only the amount to prevent disconnection". Situation: Client is in a payment plan for the amount of 550.00; installment plan payment is 125.00, the current bill is \$100.00. The disconnect notice hasn't been issued yet. Are you saying we should only pay the \$125 and not clear the whole \$550?

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	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov. It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer to payment plan "what if" questions because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	On a payment plan, are we paying the installment amount or the entire amount. On the installment plan you showed it did not show anything past due, other than the whole amount
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov. It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer to payment plan "what if" questions because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	Emma, any updates regarding funding allocations?
	Answer	Funding information will be released as received. At this time we are watching the federal budget closely and will provide additional information as it becomes available.
Energy	Question	So for CIP - if the installment plan is for \$200 but the provider states client is not facing disconnection but the \$200 is past due, we would deny since they are not facing disconnection even though the \$200 in the installment plan is past due?
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov. It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer to payment plan "what if" questions because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	On the resources slide for CIP, there were only a few resources listed; are those the only resources we are to look at?
	Answer	Please refer to Energy CIP policy section 400.03F6.
Energy	Question	Can we utilize the resource list in LIEAP and/or FNS policy for a more detailed list?
	Answer	Please refer to Energy CIP policy section 400.03F6. LIEAP policy does not currently look at resources.
Energy	Question	Our prepaid provider does not accept pledges for their prepaid accounts. Therefore they do not apply funds until they receive the direct deposit. Direct deposits can take 14 days or more. So, four days is not enough time to prevent disconnection. Do you have any suggestions?
	Answer	We are actively researching solutions for this and will provide additional information as soon as it is available.
Energy	Question	When sending up quesitons for clarification on a CIP app, will they be answered within a day due to prociessing times for the CIP app?
	Answer	If the question applies to an emergency CIP case that has a 1 business processing time frame, please include that in the subject line of the email and mark it high importance.

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Energy	Question	If someone is self-employed , do we request current month or use their 2024 tax return if still in business?
	Answer	You would request CIP base period wages, which are the month of application.
Energy	Question	Our CIP Worksheet does not address resources (DSS-8178A). Can we use the LIEAP worksheet DSS-8116-I?
	Answer	We are in the process of updating the DSS-8178 to include resources.
Energy	Question	How is client eligible for CIP if on a payment agreement plan and they are no longer in jeopardy of being disconnected, then they are not in a crisis.
	Answer	Per CIP policy section 400.01 A household is considered to be in a life threatening or health related crisis if the heating or cooling source is disconnected, or the household is currently experiencing or is in danger of experiencing a life-threatening or health-related emergency due to lack of heating/cooling, and sufficient, timely, and appropriate assistance is not available from any other source. Life-threatening is defined as a household which has no heating or cooling source or has a disconnect, final or past due notice for their primary heating or cooling service and the health or well-being of a household member would be in danger if the heating or cooling crisis was not alleviated.
Energy	Question	Regarding CIP: how much do we know to use as the past due on the payment plan?
	Answer	This will vary depending on the plan and circumstances. If you have questions regarding what needs to be paid when an applicant is on a payment plan, please submit your question and include the case identifying information the policy questions portal at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov . It is not possible to provide an all encompassing answer because variables will differ from case to case.
Energy	Question	What was the policy number for the energy installments plan?
	Answer	Installment plans are energy bills and are addressed in CIP policy sections 400.03 H, J, and I discussing heating and cooling crisis determination, life threatening or health related crisis, and verification and documentation.
Energy	Question	Will the Cip application be updated to add the Resources information?
	Answer	Yes, this is currently being updated and will be shared with counties once completed, approved and posted.
Energy	Question	For Cip/Lieap apps received outside of the correct county, would you key the app and then transfer?

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	Answer	If the application was submitted to the agency using a method other than ePASS, the agency can forward that application within 1 business day to the correct agency. If the application is not forwarded to the receiving agency within 1 business day, it will need to be keyed into NC FAST and transferred.
Energy	Question	If a CIP app was transferred on the day of processing does that show on the transferring counties report or the county that it was transferred to?
	Answer	It would show on the report for the county that it was transferred to; however, those applications can be backed out of the receiving county's timeliness percentages when the delay was caused by another county transferring the application untimely.
Energy	Question	As a follow up to our question in that situation would you send the app back to the transferring county or process it
	Answer	The county where the applicant resides must process the application. Applications cannot be processed outside of the county that the applicant resides.
General	Question	According to NCFast Summary sent on 7/21 "Reminder 7/21/2025: Counties are reminded that users can search by participants' address using the "All Participants Search" screen in NC FAST. This search will provide all participants who currently and previously reside at the entered address." We have tried using addresses that we know have multiple recipients in residence, with no success. Are other counties experiencing this same problem? (This would be an extremely beneficial feature!)
	Answer	We did not receive any feedback from other counties on this. But this concern has been passed on to NC FAST for investigation.
General	Question	How do we get access to these queues?
	Answer	Yes, relevant work queues should be worked and are assigned to workers by their system Administration. Supervisors should request the appropriate work queues for staff.
General	Question	In addition to reports, should counties be reviewing NC Fast Work Queues
	Answer	Yes