



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ECONOMIC & FAMILY SERVICES

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH  
SECRETARY

WAYNE E. BLACK  
DIRECTOR

January 17, 2018

Dear County Director of Social Services

**Attention: Food and Nutrition Services, Work First Administrators, Managers and Supervisors**

**Subject: Program Improvement Plans**

The Economic and Family Services Section will host a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) webinar on January 30, 2018 from 9am -11am. The purpose of this webinar is to introduce a "new" template for developing and implementing an effective (PIP) for Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), FNS Employment & Training (E&T) and Work First Programs. The format will guide and support counties in meeting federal requirements and providing accurate and timely benefits to eligible citizens of the State.

The training will discuss in detail how to identify areas of improvement, program goals, root cause analysis, program improvement strategies, responsible parties, timeframes, and the evaluation process. Attached you will find a sample of the template that will be discussed during the webinar. We request that you review and have this information available for reference during the webinar.

Registration for the webinar can be completed by accessing the link below:

[Register now!](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. To view system requirements, click on this link: [View System Requirements](#) We look forward to you joining us! Should you have additional PIP clarification, please submit your questions via the email address [dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Locklear".

David Locklear, Deputy Director

Attachment:

Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Template

**EFS-OST-01-2018**

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## Program Improvement Plan (PIP)

It is important to have a PIP that is effective in facilitating positive change. See below for descriptions and examples of the areas that make up an effective PIP.

### Area(s) for Improvement:

Describe why you are developing a Program Improvement Plan. This could be from many different sources including but not limited to:

- Management Evaluation Finding
- Quality Control Errors
- Failure to meet timeliness requirements

### Goal:

Describe your final goal. For example: Increase and maintain a minimum Food and Nutrition Timeliness rate of 95% or higher.

### Root Cause:

Describe the cause(s) that have been identified by your agency that are contributing to the current deficiency in the area for improvement.

- Root cause analysis is a step by step questioning process that focuses on finding the underlying cause of a problem.
  - Identify the fundamental reasons why something undesirable happened.
  - Correctly identify the root causes so appropriate Action Plans can be identified and put in place.
  - Develop a PIP that will prevent reoccurrence of the problem.

Identifying root causes can have a large impact on the program improvement strategy that is implemented. For example, it may not be the best use of your agency's time to develop a plan that encompasses your whole staff if your root cause analysis revealed that all your mistakes were made by one or two individuals. It would be a better use of time and resources to develop a PIP to address the issues with those individuals.

### Program Improvement Strategy:

Describe the actions that will be taken to address the area(s) for improvement.

- Identify an action plan for each cause
- Identify what changes can be made to the process to prevent reoccurrences
  - Such as:
    - Procedure changes.
    - Staff education.

Include measurement indicators in your program improvement strategy.

### Responsible Parties:

Where applicable, who is:

- Conducting training
- Developing new processes
- Implementing new processes
- Conducting monitoring

### Time Frame:

Describe PIP time frame:

- Start date: When will you begin the PIP?
- Checkpoints / Monitoring milestones: At what points, will you evaluate the effectiveness of your PIP and adjust as needed?
- End date: What is your expected completion date or how do you know when you have achieved your stated goal?

### Evaluation / Progress Measurements:

Progress Measurements:

Describe how your agency will continuously evaluate each action step taken to see if improvement is being achieved.

How will you measure your success? Such as meeting an acceptable rate of timeliness, quality control, second party reviews.

Example of an effective PIP:

<b>Program Improvement Plan (PIP)</b>	
<b>Area(s) for Improvement:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food and Nutrition Workers are consistently failing to enter the interview date on new applications.</li> </ul>	
<b>Goal:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview date must be documented in NC FAST for ALL new applications taken. The goal is 100% accuracy.</li> </ul>	
<b>Root Cause:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It has been determined that the root cause of the caseworker's failure to document interviews in NC FAST is a lack of understanding of the basic policy. When surveyed 45% did not know that it is a requirement and 55% believed it was only necessary if the interview was conducted on a day different than the application date.</li> </ul>	
<b>Program Improvement Strategy:</b>	
<p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The entire intake staff will be retrained on policy section FNS 310 Interviewing and Administrative Letter 4-2015. Sign-in sheets and training materials used will be saved and provided as verification of training.</li> </ul> <p>Monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A targeted second party review will be conducted to monitor documentation of interviews.</li> <li>Lead workers in each unit will conduct a minimum of 5 second party reviews per week for each intake worker.</li> <li>The results of the second party reviews will be compiled every two weeks and the second party review summary reviewed with the staff.</li> </ul>	
<b>Responsible Parties:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead worker Donna Do-good will conduct training and maintaining copies of all training materials and sign-in sheets.</li> <li>Lead workers Donna Do-good, Tamara Tom, and Willie Watson will conduct second party reviews.</li> <li>Lead workers Tamara Tom and Willie Watson will be responsible for compiling second party results.</li> <li>Donna Do-good will review the second party review summary with the intake workers and provide remedial training as needed.</li> </ul>	
<b>Time Frame:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Training will occur on September 25, 2017.</li> <li>Second party reviews will begin the following Monday October 2, 2017.</li> <li>First review of second party results will take place on Monday October 16, 2017 and repeat every two weeks.</li> <li>Second party reviews will terminate after two consecutive results second party review summaries with 0 errors.</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation / Progress Measurements:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Second party reviews summary will be reviewed with staff every two weeks.</li> <li>Remedial training will be conducted if any errors are found.</li> <li>The training and PIP will be reviewed if there is not progressive improvement for each subsequent second party results review.</li> <li>Second party reviews, results meetings, and remedial training will remain in effect until there are two consecutive results meetings with 0 errors.</li> <li>After two consecutive results summaries with 0 errors, the targeted second party will terminate. The requirement to document the interview will be added to the regular second party review documents.</li> </ul>	