



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

ROY COOPER • Governor
KODY KINSLEY • Secretary
SUSAN G. OSBORNE • Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being
DREW PLEDGER Chairman

Meeting Minutes
Social Services Commission Quarterly Meeting
September 11, 2024

I. Call to Order

1. Chairman Pledger called the Social Services quarterly meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Meeting was in person and virtual using Go-To-Webinar.
2. Chairman Pledger read the ethic statement/conflicts of interest statement; being that there were none, Paris Penny proceeded to call the roll.
3. Social Services Commission roll call:
 - a. **Commissioners in attendance and constituting a quorum were:** Chairman Drew Pledger, Brandie Walser, Jeanne Lindquist, Dr. Tia Crooms, Margie Christopher, Willa Wyatt, Tanisha James, Robert Simmons, Rebecca Andrews, Wixie Stephens, Kelsey Crowe and Cindy Locklear
 - b. **Commissioners absent:** Ernestine Taylor and Samantha Branch
 - c. **DHHS Staff Present:** Paris Penny (DSS), Danielle Upchurch (DSS), Lisa Cauley (DSS), Adrian Daye (DSS), David Lee (DSS), William Wakefield (DSS), Misty Piekaar-McWilliams (DAS), Glenda Artis (DAS), Jay Pontier (NC FAST), and Rajeev Premakumar (DHHS)
 - d. **DOJ Staff Present:** Tom Campbell
 - e. **Others:** Charles Lycette, Dare County Health and Human Services Director
4. Chairman Drew Pledger provided introductions and opening remarks.
5. Motion by Commissioner Robert Simmons to move and approve the meeting minutes from June 12, 2024. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rebecca Andrews and carried without dissent.

II. New Business

1. Misty Piekaar-McWilliams informed Commissioners that the comment period ended for rules belonging to the Office of Economic Opportunity located in subchapter 97 of 10A NCAC. She requested of the Social Services Commission to make a motion to submit the rules belonging to the Office of economic Opportunity to the Rules Review Commission. Motion to submit the rules to the Rules Review Commission as requested by Jeanne Lindquist and seconded by Margie Christopher and carried without dissent.
2. The role of DHHS General Counsel to Periodic Review process was highlighted by Raj Premakumar, Deputy General Counsel of DHHS and Rulemaking Coordinator for DHHS.

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

DHHS is working with all rulemaking coordinators across divisions and offices for this first phase of the Periodic Review process to determine if rules are necessary or unnecessary. These all involve public comment periods and reports from the public comment period must be submitted to Rules Review Commission. The Rules Review Commission will vote to approve or disapprove the report. Some rules are out of date; therefore, this is a process for DHHS to verify if these rules are in effect for good reason. It is an arduous process to get through the Rules Review Commission. As you have experienced, rules are not taken lightly and most of the rules in the North Carolina Administrative Code are necessary. This is not the end of the process. Once rules are determined to be necessary, they must be readopted, and this process takes several months. For Social Services Commission purposes it is important to review the rules and keep connecting rules with boots on the ground. Social Services Commission has wide purview for social services programs, except Medicaid. This time, all DHHS rule making coordinators meet twice a month and share ideas and address questions.

3. Glenda Artis presented what programs are included in the State-In Home fund. After, Misty Piekaar-McWilliams requested the Social Services Commission to make a motion to approve all rules found in 10A NCAC 06, which includes both State In Home fund rules and adult day services rules as necessary. Commissioner Robert Simmons made a motion to make an initial determination that the rules located in 10A NCAC 06 are necessary, and Commissioner Jeanne Lindquist seconded and carried without dissent.
4. Appointments to county boards of social services to fill the seats. Applications voted upon as follows:
 - a. Congressional District 8:
 - i. Motion by Commissioner Cindy Locklear to move to appoint Kristie Phifer to Anson County Department of Social Services Board. Motion seconded by Commissioner Jeanne Lindquist and carried without dissent.
 - b. Congressional District 9:
 - ii. Motion by Commissioner Cindy Locklear to move to appoint Dorothy B Tyson to Scotland County Department of Social Services Board. Motion seconded by Commissioner Robert Simmons and carried without dissent.

III. Presentations

Presentation by Adrian Day and Lisa Cauley about Kinship Care will be emailed to Social Services Commission on 11 September 2024.

Regional Support Model update was provided by Lead Regional Director, Ben Rose. Regional directors visit counties on a regular basis to provide technical assistance, guidance and put together plans for that director. Regional directors do not supervise county staff. Regional directors work closely with staff at the state, such as program consultants. Regional directors advocate for county departments of social services and

communicate this back to the State. One of the biggest hindrances is recruitment and retention and new county department of social services directors. Regional directors are helping them understand what is critical to look at and what training is needed in the counties. The State and counties are often reactive and want to shift to being more proactive. One way to help with this is for the Social Services Commissioners join county regional directors' meetings. Regional directors are helping county directors understand the impact of class action lawsuits. Positive steps are occurring with child and family specialty plans.

David Lee iterated advocacy is an important piece of support that the State can receive. This is a complex issue that does not have one simple solution to it. First there is a lack of placement and lack of resources across the State. Second is the time that it takes to find the most appropriate placement. Third is a lack of resources because county departments of social services are challenged. Therefore, this requires a holistic and multi-agency solution.

IV. Staff Comments

Paris Penny shared that Sarah Cunningham, [Legislative Library](#) at the [North Carolina General Assembly](#) is seeking information about the North Carolina State Social Services Commission authorized by [G.S. 143B-153](#).

New legislation (S.L. 2024-45, Sec. 7) requires the Legislative Library to collect the following information from all current State boards, committees, and commissions:

1. A list of the current membership.
2. A copy of the last reported minutes.
3. A copy of the current bylaws. The Social Services Commission does not have bylaws and that is okay.
4. A list of all the entities that the North Carolina State Social Services Commission submits reports to.

Next quarterly meeting is December 11, 2024.

Quarterly meeting dates for 2025:

March 12, June 11, September 10, December 10

V. Commission Comments

VI. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Robert Simmons to adjourn the quarterly meeting at 11:20 a.m. Motion seconded by Commissioner Becky Andrews and carried without dissent.