

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 5-2018
(Work First)**

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Work First Program Administrators, Managers, and Supervisors

DATE: May 9, 2018

SUBJECT: Work First Benefit Diversion and Services for Low Income Families Survey for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018 - 2019

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2018

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) State Plan provides county agencies with the option to provide Benefit Diversion to Work First families and select the income limits at which eligibility is determined for Work First Services.

County agencies are required to elect if they will or will not offer Benefit Diversion to Work First applicants and provide written notification. This ensures all applicants are provided an equal opportunity to receive benefits or services under the Work First program.

All counties must provide Work First Services for Low Income Families at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Counties must designate which FPL they will utilize to determine income eligibility, 150% or 200%. Other federal poverty levels are not allowed for Work First Services. Please refer to [DSS Administrative Letter No. Economic and Family Services 04-2018](#) for the **allowable** federal poverty levels for 2018.

County agencies must provide written notification to the Division of Social Services of their intent for service provision each state fiscal year.

II. POLICY PROCEDURES

The Division is requesting the completion of the attached survey by each county agency for SFY 2018 - 2019. The survey responses serve as written notification of each county's plan for providing services. A response must be provided for both the Benefit Diversion **and** Work First Services survey questions. All returned survey responses will be maintained on file at the Division.

The county agency's survey response for Work First Services will be programmed into NC FAST. When NC FAST processes a Work First Services case, the county's designated FPL will be used to determine income eligibility for services.

Benefit Diversion and Work First Services are part of the Work First program monitoring. If services are provided differently than reported, it will result in a monitoring finding and potential County Responsible Overpayment (CROP).

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

The survey must be completed in its entirety and submitted to the Division by **May 30, 2018**. If a county agency fails to return the survey by the deadline, the county's designation will default to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level for Work First Services and be classified as providing Benefit Diversion. In the event a county agency does not record a response for one of the questions, the county's designation will default to 200% of the FPL for Work First Services or be classified as providing Benefit Diversion, as applicable.

The designations chosen will be effective July 1, 2018, the start of the state fiscal year.

If there are questions, please contact Sharon, D. Moore, Work First Program Policy Consultant at Sharon.D.Moore@dhhs.nc.gov or (919) 527-6313.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Division of Social Services
Economic and Family Services

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Attachment:

[SFY 2018 - 2019 Benefit Diversion and Work First Services Survey](#)