

**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance**

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Robin Gary Cummings, M.D.
Deputy Secretary for Health Services
Director, Division of Medical Assistance

December 16, 2014

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Re: Strategies to reduce the number of Medicaid Cases overdue for recertification

In an effort to reduce the number of Medicaid cases currently overdue for recertification, Department of Health and Human Services is evaluating a number of options to assist counties in completing these recertifications in a less time intensive manner. Once these options have been thoroughly evaluated, DHHS will issue further communication explaining what changes, if any, will be made to current policy or procedural guidance.

In addition to the options currently being evaluated, DHHS would like to recommend a number of steps that can be taken at the county level to assist in decreasing the processing time required to complete transactions in NC FAST. These steps may also help streamline internal operations to ensure you are operating as efficiently as possible.

Firstly, DHHS recommends that you continually monitor the reports of pending applications and recertifications that are provided to ensure that your county is completing the necessary volume of transactions required to reduce the current volume of overdue applications and recertifications. If you are not on target to reduce the current number of overdue Medicaid recertifications by the end of March 2015, as well as maintain up to date processing in other programs, try taking the following steps: add additional temporary staff, allow for overtime or comp time for current caseworkers, or a combination of the two. If you are adding additional temporary staff, DHHS recommends that you evaluate using the fastest method possible to bring these individuals to a productive capacity. We suggest placing these temporary staff in areas where the required processing steps are more standard, such as completing Food and Nutrition Services recertifications for small households with minimal expenses and income, or completing ex parte reviews with minimal changes. This will allow temporary staff to be productive in the shortest amount of time.

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In order to further streamline application and recertification processing, DHHS also recommends that a specific set of county resources be dedicated to the processing of applications received via Healthcare.gov. Given the commencement of open enrollment on November 15th, it is imperative that you stay current with processing Medicaid applications as they arrive from Healthcare.gov. As you process applications and recertifications, a procedure to track the completion of follow up actions, such as gathering additional information from the client, should be put into place so that all forms are sent and actions taken at the soonest possible moment allowed per policy. This will help ensure there is not a longer than necessary lapse in time while waiting for the needed client information. Contacting clients to encourage a timely return of information is also recommended.

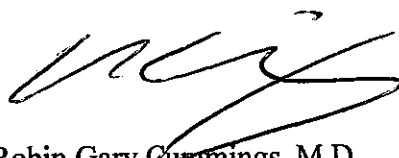
Finally, DHHS would like to assist the facilitation of caseworkers from one county helping in another, if circumstances allow. Therefore, if you are a county that has already completed overdue applications and recertifications and are current in all programs, as well as have staff that would be willing to work additional hours on behalf of another county, please let a DHHS representative know. It may be possible to coordinate having trained and experienced caseworkers from a county that is current with processing assist a county that is not current with all applications and recertifications.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact the Operational Support Team at ost.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



Wayne Black
Director, Division of Social Services



Robin Gary Cummings, M.D.
Deputy Secretary for Health Services
Director, Division of Medical Assistance