

§ 108A-27.2. General duties of the Department.

The Department shall have the following general duties with respect to the Work First Program:

- (1) Ensure that the specifications of the general provisions of the State Plan regarding the procedures required when recipients are sanctioned, prescribed in G.S. 108A-27.9(c), are uniformly developed and implemented across the State;
- (1a) Provide technical assistance to Electing Counties developing and implementing and to Standard Counties implementing their County Plans, including providing information concerning applicable federal law and regulations and changes to federal law and regulations that affect the permissible use of federal funds and scope of the Work First Program in a county;
- (1b) Reserved for future codification purposes.
- (1c) Ensure that all families with work eligible parents and parents with children under the age of 12 months receive Work First benefits in the month after compliance with their Mutual Responsibility Agreement. Failure to comply with their Mutual Responsibility Agreement shall result in no Work First Benefits the following month, unless there is good cause.
- (2) Describe authorized federal and State work activities. For up to twenty percent (20%) of Work First recipients, authorized State work activities shall include at least part-time enrollment in a postsecondary education program. In Standard Counties, recipients enrolled on at least a part-time basis in a postsecondary education program and maintaining a 2.5 grade point average or its equivalent shall have their two-year time limit suspended for up to three years.
- (3) Define requirements for assignment of child support income and compliance with child support activities;
- (4) Establish a schedule for Electing Counties to submit their County Plans to ensure that all Electing County Plans are adopted by Electing Counties by February 1 of each odd-numbered year and review and then recommend a State Plan to the General Assembly;
- (5) Ensure that the Electing County Plans comply with federal and State laws, rules, and regulations, are consistent with the overall purposes and goals of the Work First Program, and maximize federal receipts for the Work First Program;
- (6) Prepare the State Plan in accordance with G.S. 108A-27.9 and federal laws and regulations and submit it to the Budget Director for approval;
- (7) Submit the State Plan, as approved by the Budget Director, to the General Assembly for approval;
- (8) Repealed by Session Laws 2003-284, s. 10.57, effective July 1, 2003.
- (9) Develop and implement a system to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Work First Program on children and families, including the impact of the Work First Program on job retention and advancement, child abuse and neglect, caseloads for child protective services and foster care, school attendance, academic and behavioral performance, and other measures of the economic security and health of children and families. The system should be developed to allow monitoring and evaluation of impact based on both aggregated and disaggregated data. State and county agencies shall

cooperate in providing information needed to conduct these evaluations, sharing data and information except where prohibited specifically by federal law or regulation;

- (10) Monitor the performance of Electing Counties relative to their respective Plans and the overall goals of the Work First Program. Monitor Standard Counties relative to the State Plan and the overall goals of the Standard Work First Program;
- (11) Repealed by Session Laws 2003-284, s. 10.57, effective July 1, 2003.
- (12) Report to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services the counties which have requested Electing status; provide copies of the proposed Electing County Plans to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, if requested; and make recommendations to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services on which of the proposed Electing County Plans ensure compliance with federal and State laws, rules, and regulations and are consistent with the overall purposes and goals for the Work First Program; and
- (13) Make recommendations to the General Assembly for approval of counties to become Electing Counties which represent, in aggregate, no more than fifteen and one-half percent (15.5%) of the total Work First caseload at September 1 of each year and, for each county submitting a plan, the reasons individual counties were or were not recommended.
- (14) Review the county Work First Program of each Electing County and recommend whether the county should continue to be designated an Electing County or whether it should be redesignated as a standard county. In conducting its review and making its recommendation, the Department shall:
 - a. Examine and consider the results of the Department's monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Electing County's Work First Program as required under subdivision (9) of this section;
 - b. Determine whether the Electing County's Work First Program's unique design requires implementation by an Electing County or whether the Work First Program could be implemented by a county designated as a standard county;
 - c. Determine whether the Electing County's Work First Program and policies are unique and innovative in meeting the purpose of the Work First Program as stated under G.S. 108A-27, and State and federal laws, rules, and regulations, as compared to other standard and Electing County Work First programs.

The Department shall make its recommendation and the reasons therefor to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services not later than three months prior to submitting the State Plan to the Commission for review as required under G.S. 108A-27.9(a). (1997-443, s. 12.6; 1998-212, s. 12.27A(g); 1999-237, s. 7.10(b); 1999-359, ss. 1.2(a), 2(a), (b), 6; 2001-424, s. 21.13(b), (e); 2003-284, s. 10.57; 2009-489, s. 3.)