



**DURHAM COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Covid Update**  
**September 8, 2020**

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# Overview

- DSS has remained open and providing full services through the Corona Virus Pandemic
- DSS has seen an overall steady flow of services with increased demands in the financial assistance programs
- DSS has supported state efforts and implemented state and federal waiver programs to provide additional assistance to residents



# *Food and Nutrition Services*

- Maximum Allotments for all Food and Nutrition Cases (averaging \$1.8 million in benefits per month)
- Pandemic EBT: Supplemental EBT benefits distributed to families receiving free/reduced school lunches during the spring of 2020
- Online Shopping waiver received for EBT recipients
- DSS implementing the Healthy Helpings Program to provide fruit and vegetable EBT supplements



# Medicaid and Work First

- State has issued Covid Medicaid to provide Medicaid coverage for testing of the Corona Virus for any person without health insurance
- Medicaid auto renewal through July of 2020
- Work First Cases are not being terminated during the state declared emergency
- A one-time payment went to all TANF households per child to assist with pandemic related expenses
- Work First sanctions are suspended for the state declared emergency



# Child Care

- Parent Fees have been and continued to be waived for Child Care Subsidy recipients. This waiver ends August 31
- Vaccination and health assessments dates suspended (but not waived)
- Centers received full payment for subsidized children for April and May. Centers that were open during summer received full payment, whether children were in attendance or not. Starting in September, payment will be based on attendance/with no waiving of parent fees



# Adult and Aging Services

- Provided county emergency related funds for rental assistance and eviction prevention services in June (\$90,000)
- County partnering with City of Durham to administer a million dollar CDBG grant for eviction diversion due to Covid
- County has exhausted in July/August the county Eviction Diversion dollars to assist those impacted by Covid
- \$103,000 in county emergency assistance issued in July
- \$37,589 in Crisis Intervention Dollars issued in July (federal)
- Maintained Adult Day Care Center payments to Durham Senior Center (state waiver)



# Aging and Adult Services Cont

- \$213,000 expended for Crisis Intervention Program for June and July, supporting utility assistance for impacted residents



# Child Welfare

- A \$100 board payment supplement provided to foster homes during the state declared emergency
- CPS (and APS) workers designated as first responders
- Additional allocation for CPS and APS expenses provided to DSS through CARES Act (conditional use, cannot supplant)





# *Other Critical Actions*

- DSS closed all lobbies in April
- DSS has adjusted hours for public access and created self-service features
- DSS does no-contact service delivery for many services (except protective services/foster care)
- DSS has developed remote work plans and is implementing extensive remote work capacity
- Legal interactions and court have moved to webex and Teams Meetings



# *Other Critical Actions Cont*

- DSS is working with partners to address remote school challenges for both workforce and resource families
- DSS has processed 7431 Food and Nutrition Applications from March 20 to July 31
- DSS created drop box for clients and outdoor self-service area
- DSS did facility assessment and is building technology based interview rooms



# *Other Critical Actions Cont*

- State is assessing Crisis Intervention/Low Income Energy Assistance programs as an electronic application thru EPASS
- Telephonic signatures are now allowed on many financial assistance programs
- Crisis Intervention does not require a utility disconnect notice to receive services, just a past-due bill
- DSS working with Emergency Management and partners to plan for sheltering during the pandemic
- DSS contributed to employee screening



# QUESTIONS























