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DSS Press Release: August 2018

“Work First Parents Must Do Their Part to Become Self Sufficient”

Work First is North Carolina's plan to help families stay off welfare or move off welfare and into jobs. Work First is not just a cash assistance program, rather, it is built upon the belief that all people have a responsibility to their families and community to work and provide for their children.

In order to qualify for Work First benefits, you must be a resident of North Carolina, either pregnant or responsible for a child under 18 years of age, a U.S. national, citizen, legal alien, or permanent resident, have low or very low income, and be either under-employed (working for very low wages), unemployed or about to become unemployed. Work First Family Assistance (WFFA) offers financial assistance to families with young children. However, families must participate in approved work-related activities in order to receive benefits.

Work First Employment Services (WFES) Social Workers assess the family's strengths and needs using a variety of tools. Based on the outcome of those assessments, an outcome plan is developed with the parent for how they can best move toward sustained employment. This plan is called the “Mutual Responsibility Agreement Plan of Action” or MRA for short.

Parents often begin their activities with job search or they may be placed with a local business or non-profit organization to do volunteer work. These placements are designed to give the parent the opportunity to develop good work habits in a real world setting and hopefully to earn a recommendation from their supervisor for placement into a position either where they are currently placed or with another employer.

Regular meetings are held between the parent and their Social Worker to discuss progress toward meeting their goals. The parent may choose to take advantage of the Job Retention Program. Parents who are involved in Job Retention continue to have access to their Social Worker. Also, DSS is able to assist these parents with a monthly payment to off-set some of the cost of driving to and from work and may also be able to assist with other emergency needs while the parent is in the Job Retention Program. Taking advantage of these available program resources is an important part of their ability to reach their employment goals and to gain financial stability.

If you have questions about any aspect of the Work First Program, call or visit your local county DSS. In Randolph County, call 336-683-8009. You can also visit:

[Http://www.co.randolph.nc.us/dss/](http://www.co.randolph.nc.us/dss/) or the state web site at: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dss>.

P.O. Box 3239, Asheboro, North Carolina 27204

www.randolphcountync.gov/Departments/Social-Services

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