

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

**HENDERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

MEETING DATE: **October 17, 2012**

SUBJECT: Social Services' Informational Update

PRESENTER: Don Cooper, Vice-Chair, DSS Board

ATTACHMENTS: Yes

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The DSS Board is providing monthly three-minute informational updates to the Board of Commissioners regarding various Social Services issues. The October 2012 update, provided by DSS Board Vice-Chair Don Cooper, pertains to NC FAST.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

No Board action requested. This item is for information only.

Suggested Motion:

No motion suggested.

NC FAST

What is NC FAST?

- A new state level technology in Raleigh replacing the current thirty-year old state main frame system to which all 100 counties will be connected.
- A new state level technology reducing county customer and staff time and costs:
 - One-stop applications: a customer gives information one time to one worker; the same information can be used across all public assistance program eligibility determinations.
 - Faster automated tools: a Henderson County resident receives quicker applications and eligibility determinations.

During the six-month NC FAST transition, all Food Stamp worker tasks will take a lot longer.

- Pilot and Phase I county staff productivity dropped an average of 25% to 50% in all counties.
- Currently an application interview takes about 30 minutes on average. During the start-up and transition, an application will likely take 60 minutes or longer.
- All 14,000 Henderson County residents currently receiving benefits will have all their information individually entered into the new technology prior to application. This conversion will take 30 minutes for each person (i.e. a household of two will take 60 minutes; a household of three 90 minutes, etc.)

Working within DSS resources and budgeted funds, and based on staff study of NC FAST pilot county experiences, the following recommendations are made:

- **Establish temporary staff conversation team to focus exclusively on converting household and individual data:**
 - Fund three (3) temporary staff by dedicating \$15,000 and \$26,000 available in overtime and temporary budget line items for four (4) months.
 - Freeze two (2) vacant positions allowing accruing lapse salary to be available, if needed, after the four (4) month period.
- **Minimize overtime:**
 - Limit staff overtime to 2.5 hours if overtime is necessary.
- **Awareness & Education:**
 - Press Releases
 - Mailing to all Food & Nutrition households providing information on impact to customer services with the NC FAST transition
 - Continue education and awareness with food providers in community
 - Send written information home to parents (through children) participating in school lunch program