

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION !!!!!

URGENT !!!!!

CPPS Change Notice 04-2002

Manual: Child Placement and Payment System

Effective: Immediately

Date: April 10, 2002

Attached is the new Child Placement and Payment System Manual. The manual revision incorporates changes to the instructions for completing and entering data on the Forms DSS-5094 and DSS-5095. Pay particular attention to all information that is underlined in this document, as the underlined information indicates additions or changes in the instructions. The manual will be posted on the Division of Social Services, Children's Services Section's web site at:

{ HYPERLINK <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/childrenservices/index.htm> }

When viewed on the web site, the additions or changes will appear in red print.

The accurate and timely completion and updating of the 5094 and 5095 forms have taken on new importance as a result of the Child and Family Services Review in March, 2001 conducted by the federal Administration on Children and Families (ACF). As a result of that review, the state was required to develop a Program Improvement Plan designed to bring us into substantial conformity in 7 federal outcome areas. Improvement in the capturing and reporting of information is an important part of the Plan. Our progress in achieving substantial conformity is measured through submission of information from our AFCARS (5094 and 5095) system in May and November of each year.

The May AFCARS submission will mark our first opportunity to demonstrate progress toward achieving the level of substantial conformity that we need to avoid financial penalties. Consequently, we are urging each county DSS to do 2 things with the revised manual material: (1) ask your child welfare supervisor(s) to assure that all agency staff responsible for the completion, update or data entry of the 5094 and 5095 forms become familiar with the changes to the reporting instructions; and (2) **review and accurately update every open 5094 and 5095 on a schedule that permits you to enter the forms into the system by May 10, 2002.** We recognize that this will require concerted effort but we also understand that an accurate data set for the May AFCARS submission will be viewed by ACF as an important accomplishment for the state.

In updating the forms, please pay particular attention to the following clarifications:

- **If any case is found to be open in the system through the DSS-5094 that should be closed, please close out the 5094 and the related service(s) on the DSS-5027. Closing the 5027 will not, however, automatically terminate the 5094 (see page 2 of the manual).**

- Children who are in trial home visits should have the Living Arrangement in Field #45 coded as Code 75 instead of Code 50 (Home of Parent) or Code 51 (Home of Legal Guardian). Code 50 and 51 should only be used for children who enter DSS custody or placement responsibility but are not placed in out-of-home care. Remember that trial home visits should not typically extend beyond six months (see Dear County Director Letter No. CS 09-2002 dated March 14, 2002 for more discussion on this issue).
- Fields #40 through Field #44 (Agency Team Reviews and Court Reviews) are identified as errors in the AFCARS data set when they are not updated on a regular basis. Please check these dates for all children with open DSS-5094 forms to ensure that they are current and are updated regularly. A recent AFCARS test submission identified an unacceptable error rate in these fields.
- Although federal reporting instructions do not allow you to correct erroneous information that you may have entered in Fields #19, 20, 21, and 25-33, these Fields can be corrected by Division staff. To request a change in one of these Fields, please update the 5094 form, lining through the inaccurate data and entering the accurate data, and fax it to Kay Becknel at (919) 715-6396.

Finally, we are asking that **each county DSS identify one individual in the agency to be the central contact person for issues related to AFCARS reporting and the completion of the 5094 and 5095 forms.** The Division will communicate any information, questions, or instructions regarding the data from the DSS-5094 or DSS-5095 to your agency through that central contact person, and that individual will be asked to communicate any needed instructions to all affected members of your staff. **Please submit the name of your agency's contact person on the attached form no later than May 10, 2002** to Gwen Horton by fax at (919) 715-6396.

If you have any questions, please contact your CPR or you may contact Kay Becknel at (919) 733-3801. We greatly appreciate your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Charles C. Harris, Chief



Children's Services Section

CCH: sam
Attachment