

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE 20-2001  
(Work First)**

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services

**ATTENTION:** Work First Supervisors

**DATE:** November 6, 2001

**RE:** County Work First Plan Amendment Regarding Work

Requirements for Single Parents of Children Under Age One

**EFFECTIVE**

**DATE:** November 1, 2001

**I. BACKGROUND**

The State TANF Plan for October 2001 through September 2003, approved by the General Assembly in August, amends the policy that “a single parent of a child less than one year old shall not be required to comply with work requirements until the child turns one.” Federal law gives states the option of whether or not to require such individuals to comply with work requirements, with a cumulative, lifetime limit of 12 months per individual. This flexibility is now extended to Standard Counties. This option was already available to Electing Counties. Changes to the policy manual to this effect will be issued shortly.

**II. PLAN AMENDMENTS**

No later than November 30, 2001, all Standard Counties and Electing Counties that did not address this policy in their Electing Plan must submit an amendment to their Work First Block Grant Plans stating the criteria for exempting single parents of children under age one from the work requirement.

Counties may decide to continue the exemption as it has been, making all single parents of children under age one exempt for a lifetime maximum of 12 months.

You may set a shorter time limit. The limit can be set according to the age of the child or the number of months the parent can be exempt. For example, if the policy is that single parents of children under three months of age are exempt, when the child reaches three months of age, the parent can no longer be exempt. Your county policy must also indicate whether the parent loses the exemption the month the child reaches three months or the month after. (Three months is used as an example; you may specify any limit up to 12 months.)

If your policy is that single parents of children under one year of age are exempt for three months, this could be applied no matter the age of the child.

You may also indicate in your plan exceptions to this policy, such as individuals who are working are not eligible for this exemption but may be exempt at a later date if they lose their job.

Also, you may specify how you will regard exempt months used in other counties when a parent moves into your county. For instance, you may say that you will exempt single parents of children under one for three months **in your county** regardless of whether or not they have been exempt for some months in another county. However, in no event may an individual be exempt for more than a 12 months cumulative lifetime period.

Submit amendments to Deborah Landry, Economic Independence Section, 325 N. Salisbury St., 2420 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420.

Your new exemption policy will be effective as soon as you have received acknowledgement from the Economic Independence Section that your amendment complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

If you have any questions, please contact your Work First Representative.

Sincerely,

Wilbert R. Morris, Chief

Economic Independence Section

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