
STATE REFUGEE OFFICE MANUAL
REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CHAPTER III – REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CHANGE #1-2022

January 1, 2022

I. INTRODUCTION

Refugees who resettle in the United States rarely have access to personal resources in their homeland or a source of income in this country when they first arrive. To sustain themselves until they become self-sufficient, refugees may apply for financial assistance at the local Department of Social Services (DSS).

The North Carolina **Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) Program** was established to provide income to refugees who do not meet qualifications for Work First Cash Assistance (WFCA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Matching Grant (MG). RCA is a short-term transitional program available for the first eight months a refugee resides in the United States. In determining eligibility for RCA, the county DSS must comply with the policies and procedures described in this chapter of the NC Refugee Assistance Manual.

Matching Grant (MG) is a separate federal program designed to help refugees attain economic self-sufficiency within four months (120 days) after date of arrival in the United States, without accessing public cash assistance. Participating NC refugee resettlement agencies agree to match the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) grant with cash and in-kind contributions for refugees who qualify. Beginning upon enrollment and continuing at least until the first paycheck is received, agencies must provide a minimum of \$200 cash allowance per month or \$50 per week, or the maximum amount that will not affect Medicaid eligibility, to all adult refugees, and \$10 per week to each minor in the case.

Refugee families with dependent minor children must first apply for, and if eligible, participate in the state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, known in North Carolina as Work First. See Work First Manual to determine eligibility for WFCA.

Refugees sixty-five (65) years of age or older, or refugees who are blind or disabled, would meet criteria for the SSI. DSS is responsible for referring eligible individuals to the Social Security Administration for SSI benefits. See Eligibility Guidelines for exceptions.

NOTE: Throughout this Chapter, the term “refugee” will refer to all groups below, who are Qualified status and potentially eligible for RCA. See Chapter I., Section III. for definitions.

- Refugees
- Asylees
- Cuban and Haitian Entrants
- Certain Amerasians (from Vietnam)
- Victims of Human Trafficking
- Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Holders from Iraq and Afghanistan. SIV’s transition to Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) who hold one of the above statuses prior to adjusting to LPR status e.g. Typically, SIV Holders transition to LPR status within the first ninety (90) days, after date of arrival into the United States.
- **Afghan Special Immigrant Parole SQ/SI**
- **Afghan Humanitarian Parolees**

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NOTE: References will be made to the NC Work First Manual whenever the WFCA and RCA programs have policies and procedures in common. Exceptions or special rules for RCA will be noted.

II. ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

Refugees can apply for the same benefits and service programs that are available to U.S. citizens. At the time of application or during a change in situation, a refugee may only access RCA if found categorically NOT eligible for WFCA. A refugee family, and/or a refugee single parent with dependent minor children are categorically eligible for WFCA and would NOT be eligible for RCA.

The refugee individual must meet the eligibility criteria below to receive RCA assistance. After the caseworker has determined that a refugee household is not eligible for WFCA, SSI, Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD), and MG programs, then the caseworker is ready to determine eligibility for RCA.

A. Immigration Status Verification

Individuals must have the proper immigration documentation reflecting refugee status.

Qualified groups, potentially eligible for Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) are Refugees, Asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Certain Amerasians (from Vietnam), Victims of Human Trafficking Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Holders from Iraq and Afghanistan, and Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR). See Chapter I. Section III. for definitions.

B. Eligibility Timeframe of Coverage

An individual can apply for RCA at the local DSS where the applicant resides within the first eight (8) months of arrival.

1. Benefits are available for eight (8) months or less from the refugee's date of arrival in the United States.
2. Benefits are available for eight (8) months or less for Asylees from the date asylum is granted in the United States.
3. Benefits are available for eight (8) months once certification provides Victims of Trafficking with the necessary documentation to be eligible to receive benefits and services.

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RCA Eligible Period of Coverage

RCA is available to eligible refugees for the first eight (8) months of arrival. The date of arrival, not the application date, is used to determine the period of coverage.	
Arrival Month	Eighth Month
January	August
February	September
March	October
April	November
May	December
June	January
July	February
August	March
September	April
October	May
November	June
December	July

C. Household Composition

The local DSS must evaluate each member of the household and determine applicant is unable to meet the eligibility requirements for WFCA, SSI, and MG programs. Determination of benefit amounts will be based on household size.

IF	THEN
Single individual (18 – 64)	Eligible for RCA
Married couple without minor children	Eligible for RCA
Single individual with minor/child/children	Ineligible for RCA
Married couple with minor child/children	Ineligible for RCA

1. Refugee Individual

A single refugee individual household must consist of one adult, with no minor children 18 years of age or older.

2. Refugee Couple

A refugee couple household may consist of a married couple with no minor children.

3. Refugee Family

A refugee family household with minor children, must first apply for, and if eligible, participate in the state WFCA program. See Work First Manual to determine eligibility.

4. Refugee 65 Years of Age or Older

A refugee 65 years of age or older, or a refugee who is blind or disabled, may meet the criteria for SSI. The state authorizes receipt of RCA until the refugee begins receiving SSI or until the 8-month RCA eligibility period expires, whichever comes first. A refugee applicant may not choose to receive RCA in lieu of SSI.

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D. Institution of Higher Education

Refugees who are full-time students in an institution of higher education are not eligible for RCA.

E. Residency Status

Proof of residency is not a condition of eligibility; accept applicant's statement of intent to reside in a county in North Carolina. Do not request other verification such as post-marked mail, rental/utility records, etc., as newly arrived refugees are not likely to have these documents.

F. Notification and Communication from Refugee Resettlement Agencies

All refugee applicants **who resettle through a Refugee Resettlement Agency (Appendix B)** should present a DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits form when applying for public benefits. If applicants do not present form DSS-6247, then they are responsible for providing their address, telephone number, and the name of the resettlement agency that assisted in their resettlement to the U.S.

DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits, is not a required form for all other populations. Asylees, victims of trafficking, and Cuban Haitian Entrants are in the U.S. before their status is granted and they often will not have an established relationship with a resettlement agency.

G. Income Requirements

Determine initial eligibility and change in situation by reviewing earned and unearned income.

1. Earned Income

- Count only income from earnings, savings in United States bank accounts, and other financial resources acquired while in the United States.
- Do not consider a sponsor's income to be accessible to a refugee.
- Do not consider any cash grant received by the applicant under the Department of State or Department of Justice Reception and Placement Program (R&P).
- The 100% Job Bonus deduction is not available for RCA cases.

2. Unearned Income

- SSI – RCA benefits will terminate once a recipient begins receiving SSI benefits.
- Matching Grant (MG) – Active MG participants are not eligible to receive RCA. When MG benefits expire, a refugee may qualify for RCA for the remainder of the 8-month eligibility period.

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H. Voluntarily Quitting Employment

As a condition of eligibility for RCA, an employable applicant may not, without good cause, within thirty (30) consecutive calendar days immediately prior to application for assistance, have voluntarily quit employment or have refused to accept an offer of employment determined to be appropriate by the NC Refugee Service Providers (RSP) or a local DSS designee (if a RSP is not in the area where the applicant resides.)

If good cause is established, and the refugee is within the eight (8) months, eligibility coverage, then the applicant may be potentially able to receive benefits, provided all other eligibility criteria has been reviewed, evaluated, and documented.

I. Resources Requirements

Resources - For additional information regarding the determination of initial and on-going eligibility (treatment of income and resources, budgeting methods, need standard), follow instructions in the NC Work First Manual Sections 114 and 115.

- Do not consider any resources remaining in the applicant's country of origin in determining eligibility,
- Do not consider a sponsor's resources to be accessible to a refugee, and
- Do not consider in-kind services and shelter provided to an applicant by a sponsor or local resettlement agency in determining eligibility for RCA.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Interview

After determining applicant's eligibility, proceed using these interview guidelines.

1. Apply cultural sensitivity in all communications.
2. Apply the same NC Confidentiality Rules that pertain to the Work First Cash Assistance (WFCA) program in the administration of the RCA program.
3. Applicants can have any person(s) of their choice participate in the interview.
4. Information must be presented in a language the applicant understands.
5. Explain RCA in understandable terms, ensuring that applicants understand their rights and responsibilities.
6. Offer the refugee an opportunity to apply for Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits on the same day.
7. Applicant does not have to be present for interview. However, the application must be signed by the applicant or authorized representative.

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Additional Responsibilities for Refugee Households

All refugee applicants **who resettle through a Refugee Resettlement Agency (Appendix B)** should present a DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits form when applying for public benefits. In addition, applicants are responsible for providing the address, telephone number, and name of the resettlement agency that assisted in their resettlement to the U.S.

DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits, is not a required form for all other populations. Asylees, victims of trafficking, and Cuban Haitian Entrants are in the U.S. before their status is granted and they often will not have an established relationship with a resettlement agency.

The refugee household is also responsible for reporting changes in situation. These include obtaining employment, receipt of income and resources, change in household composition, and/or disability.

Note: If receiving either earned or unearned income (such as Matching Grant), the application for RCA must be denied, since federal law prohibits simultaneous participation in more than one federal cash program. (The refugee may still be eligible for RMA. See Chapter II, Refugee Medical Assistance Program).

Applicant must participate in appropriate employment services unless exempt. See Section V. Employment Services for more information.

Notification and Communication between DSS and Refugee Resettlement Agency (RRA)

The local DSS is responsible for notifying the agency that provided for the initial resettlement of a refugee whenever the refugee applies for cash or medical benefits and before any change in or termination of benefits. **Asylees, victims of trafficking, and Cuban Haitian Entrants are in the U.S. before their status is granted and they often will not have an established relationship with a resettlement agency.** See Appendix A for list of agencies.

The RRA is responsible for reporting changes in situation to the local DSS. These include obtaining employment, receipt of income and resources and/or change in household and/or disability.

Maintain and retain operational records in accordance with the standards established by the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

B. RCA Application Procedures

1. **Electronic (NC FAST) or Paper Application** – To apply for RCA, the Refugee may complete an electronic North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) “New Application” or complete a paper application using DSS-6241, Refugee Cash Assistance Application.
2. **Needs Assessment** – To determine the benefit amount through a Needs Assessment (payment levels based on size of the assistance unit). Follow instructions in WFCA Section 114.

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3. **Processing Time Standard – Applications must be processed within thirty (30) calendar days** unless there is applicant delay. The thirty (30) calendar days begin the day after the date of application and ends on the day the check or denial notice is mailed. The date of application is the date the applicant, authorized representative, or someone acting on applicant's behalf, signs the application.
4. **Social Security Number –** Social Security Numbers (SSN) or proof of application for an SSN are not required for RCA applicants.
5. **Qualified Status –** An applicant for RCA must submit evidence of documentation issued by USCIS, which indicates eligibility status. A child/ren who arrives with a parent(s) carries the same qualified status as the parent(s). Secondary verification is not required. A list of acceptable USCIS documentation most often presented by refugees is in Chapter I, Section II.
 - a. Verify the documentation of immigration status.
 - b. If status is verified by documents, the applicant has a qualified status, and the caseworker shall continue determining eligibility based on other requirements. **Do not use Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) as a form of primary or secondary verification.**
 - c. If unable to confirm status from documentation supplied by applicant, **Refer to ORR Fact Sheets (Appendices E – J) as a secondary form of verification. 'Refugees' immigration status will always be verified and valid through appropriate documents. If applicants are unable to provide documentation, then they may not have adequate 'Refugee' immigration status.**

C. RCA Employment Referral Requirement

Work First employment requirements are not applicable to RCA applicants or recipients. However, employable RCA recipients must participate in employability services within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of approval disposition. See Chapter III, Section V. Employment Services.

D. Special Considerations - Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)

1. A refugee is not required to apply for or receive RCA as a condition of eligibility for RMA.
2. All recipients of RCA are NOT automatically eligible for RMA. Both programs are independent of each other.
3. Denial, reduction, or termination of RCA is to have no effect on a refugee's RMA. If an RCA case loses eligibility because of employment earnings or unearned income, the RMA determination remains for the remainder of the 8-month eligibility period. See Chapter II, Refugee Medical Assistance Program.

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IV. FINALIZE APPLICATION

A. Disposition of Application

Eligible applicants are entitled to receive RCA coverage for up to eight (8) full months from the date of arrival in the United States. The eligibility period should:

1. **Determine Benefit Amount** – Benefit payment begins on the first day of the month in which the application is made. NC FAST should not prorate benefits. After approval of a case, confirm the case was not prorated. The RCA family size and monthly benefit amount are below:

RCA Payments	
Recipients	Payment
Individual	\$181.00
Couple	\$236.00

2. **Certification / Determination Dates** – Eligibility ends eight months after the refugee’s date of arrival, on the last day of that month. For an Asylee, the date of arrival is the date asylum was granted. NC FAST certification date and determination date are the same for RCA.
3. **Documentation** - Document case disposition of application in client's case notes.

B. Notices

Once the determination of eligibility has been made, the applicant and local resettlement affiliate (if applicable) must be notified of the outcome.

1. A DSS-8108, Notice of Benefits form must be generated in NC FAST regarding the disposition of the RCA application. The notice is system generated and worker initiated. The worker must select RCA option to specify the eligibility for the RCA recipient. An approval notice must be sent to the RCA recipient and to the NC Refugee Resettlement Agency.
2. Eligibility worker **MUST** also complete DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice and provide a copy to the newly authorized RCA recipient and to the NC Refugee Resettlement Agency.

Referral is not complete until eligibility worker receives Part B of DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice back from the NC Refugee Services Provider agency.

NOTE: The local DSS is responsible for providing Employment Services i.e. obtaining a signed Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA) and for the development of both the Family Self-Sufficiency and Individual Employability Plans when a NC Refugee Service Provider agency is not located in that county.

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V. EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

A. RCA recipients (unless exempt) must complete the following within thirty (30) calendar days:

1. Participate in refugee support services that provide job or language training in the area where the refugee resides. Refer refugees using DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice. Agencies provide services that include: Job Readiness Training, English Language Training (ELT), Vocational Skills Training, and Social Adjustment. See Appendix A.
2. Enroll in Employment Services with an appropriate agency or local DSS.
3. Attend a job interview arranged by the agency, if applicable.
4. Accept employment offer, if appropriate.
5. Participate in required employment services. Participant's failure or refusal to accept employability services or employment are non-compliance with employment services, i.e. an Employability Plan, and may result in ineligibility or termination of RCA benefits. If RCA recipient is also receiving RMA benefits, RMA will continue.

B. Exemptions to the work requirement for Refugee Cash Assistance include the following individuals/populations who are:

1. under the age of 18 and attending elementary, middle, or high school, vocational or technical school (not in an instruction of higher education) as a full-time student (already evaluated and has been determined not eligible for WFCA),
2. age 65 or older,
3. a caregiver or other relative who is caring for a child under two (2) years old,
4. ill or incapacitated and the Department determines on the basis of medical evidence or on another sound basis that the illness or injury is serious enough to temporarily prevent entry into employment or training,
5. required in the home to care for another member of the household who is ill or incapacitated, or
6. Cuban/Haitian Entrants without Work Authorization (Employment Authorization Document, EAD).

NOTE: A refugee's inability to communicate in English is not a reason for exemption.

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C. Exemption Verification

1. Verify age by examining the individual's I-94 or other documentation.
2. Establish illness or incapacitation by:
 - a. documentation of the physical and/or mental illness or incapacity of the individual,
 - b. documentation of a psychological examination, if indicated, or
 - c. a medical report from a doctor or medical facility when the individual's condition is questionable.
3. **Non-Employable Cuban/Haitian Entrants cannot** apply for or be granted employment authorization, and therefore should not engage in the Refugee Support Services (RSS) employability services or participate in the Matching Grant Program. Non-Employable Entrants should be treated as other non-employable refugees.

Note: Non-Employable Entrants are eligible for RCA and RMA provided they meet the other eligibility requirements for non-employable refugees.
4. Document all findings in a detailed case note.

D. Employment Services

North Carolina has authorized certain entities to provide employment services to assist refugees in becoming self-sufficient. Refer refugees by using the DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice. See Appendices A and B for a list of authorized NC Refugee Resettlement Agencies and NC Refugee Service Providers.

These agencies will:

1. Provide proof of registration, complete Part B of DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice).
2. Complete and sign DSS-6239A, Refugee Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA).
3. Ensure that RCA recipients can participate in a range of employment services tailored to meet the specific needs of each recipient.
4. Develop an DSS-6232, Individualized Employability Plan that sets forth a program of services intended to assist refugees to obtain employment.
5. Complete a DSS-6230, Family Self-Sufficiency Plan addressing the employment related service needs of the employable family members. The purpose of the plan is to enable the family to become self-supporting through the employment of one or more family members.

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E. Counties without NC Refugee Resettlement Agencies (Refugee Service Providers)

The local DSS is responsible for obtaining a signed MRA and for developing both the Family Self-Sufficiency and Individual Employability Plans when a local affiliate is not located in that county.

F. Work Registration

Caseworkers may allow an applicant to register with the local Work First approved NC Works Career Center, if the applicant chooses to do so. Registration with NC Works Career Center is not an eligibility requirement for RCA.

G. The Employability Plan must:

1. Be designed to lead to the earliest possible employment, and not be structured in such a way as to discourage or delay employment or job-seeking, and
2. Contain a definite employment goal, consistent with the employability plan for the refugee in relation to job openings in the area.
3. Be established. DSS Employment Social Workers are not required to conduct follow-up assessments to an employability plan. RCA benefits should never be terminated because of a follow-up assessment. RCA may only be terminated if RCA recipient fails or refuses to participate in the required employment services.

H. Criteria for Employment Services

1. All assignments must be within the scope of the individual's employability plan. The plan may be modified to reflect changed services or employment conditions.
2. The services or employment must be related to the capability of the individual to perform the task on a regular basis. Any claim of adverse effect on physical or mental health must be based on adequate medical testimony from a physician or licensed or certified psychologist indicating that participation would impair the individual's physical or mental health.
3. The total daily commuting time to and from home to the service or employment site must not normally exceed two (2) hours, not including the transportation of a child to and from a childcare facility, unless a longer commuting distance or time is generally accepted in the community.
4. When child care is required, the care must meet the standards required by the state in its work and training programs for WFCA recipients [Reference the NC Child Care Subsidy Manual, DHHS, Division of Child Development].
5. The service or work site where the individual is assigned must not violate applicable federal, state, or local health and safety standards.
6. Assignments must not be discriminatory in terms of age, sex, race, creed, color, or national origin.
7. Appropriate work may be temporary, permanent, full-time, part-time, or seasonal work, if such work meets the other standards listed above.

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8. The wage shall meet or exceed the federal or state minimum wage law, whichever is applicable, and the wage shall not be substantially less favorable than the wage normally paid for similar work in that labor market.
9. The daily hours of work and the weekly hours of work shall not exceed those customary to the occupation.
10. The quality of training must meet local employers' requirements to ensure the individual will be in a competitive position within the local labor market. The training would most likely lead to employment that will meet the appropriate work criteria.
11. No individual may be required to accept employment if:
 - a. the position offered is vacant due to a strike, lockout, or other bona fide labor dispute; or
 - b. the individual would be required to work for an employer contrary to the conditions of the employee's existing membership in the union governing that occupation, however, employment not governed by the rules of union in which the individual has membership may be deemed appropriate.
12. If an individual is a professional in need of professional refresher training and other recertification services to qualify to practice that profession in the United States, the training may consist of full-time attendance in a college or professional training program, provided that such training:
 - a. is part of the individual's employability plan by the agency,
 - b. does not exceed one year's duration (including any time enrolled prior to application for assistance),
 - c. is specifically intended to assist the professional in becoming relicensed in that specific profession, and if completed can realistically be expected to result in such relicensing. The training may only be available to individuals who are employed.
13. A refugee offered suitable employment is required to accept, without regard to whether such job would interrupt a program of services planned or in progress, unless the refugee is currently participating in a program in progress of on-the-job training, or vocational training that is being carried out as part of an approved employability plan.

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I. Failure or Refusal to Accept Employment Services or Employment

If, without good cause, a non-exempt RCA recipient fails or refuses to comply with Employment Services, accept employment, or voluntarily quits a job, and:

1. The sanctioned refugee is the only member of the case, terminate cash assistance. Generate a DSS-8110, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance. See Section 264 of the NC Work First Manual. The sanction shall remain in effect for three (3) payment months for the first failure and six (6) payment months for any subsequent failure. If the RCA recipient is also receiving RMA benefits, RMA will continue and be uninterrupted.
2. The case includes another refugee, remove the sanctioned refugee and reduce the assistance. Do not consider the sanctioned refugee's needs in determining benefits. Generate and send a DSS-8110, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance. The sanction shall remain in effect for three (3) payment months for the first failure and six (6) payment months for any subsequent failure. Open an RMA case for the sanctioned refugee for the remainder of the eight (8) months eligibility period for refugee assistance, if applicable.
3. Good cause reasons for failure to comply with employment services or voluntarily quitting a job include:
 - a. discrimination by an employer based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, or political beliefs;
 - b. work demands or conditions that render continued employment unreasonable, such as not being paid on schedule or being required to work overtime and not being compensated;
 - c. acceptance of another offer of employment provided the new job meets the minimum requirement of this provision (20 or more hours per week or earnings equivalent to federal minimum wage times 20 hours);
 - d. resignation by the member under the age of 60 which is recognized by the employer as retirement;
 - e. acceptance of an offer of employment of 20 hours or more per week (or equivalent earnings) which because of circumstances beyond the control of the member does not materialize or results in employment which does not meet the suitability criteria specified in Section V;
 - f. leaving a job in connection with patterns of employment. For example, migrant farm laborers or construction workers often go from one employer to another; or
 - g. a significant family crisis or change, including, but not limited to, illness or death of a family member that requires the member's presence, household emergency, or unavailability of transportation.

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VI. CHANGE IN SITUATION

A. A change in situation is any change the refugee family unit experiences that may affect who is included in the family unit, the family's RCA payment, or whether the family unit continues to qualify for RCA. Examples include but are not limited to the following:

1. Change in household composition, i.e. pregnancy
2. Change in employment, i.e. starting or stopping employment
3. Change in unearned income i.e. Matching Grant ending, SSI beginning

NOTE: Any agency reporting the change, must complete and submit to the county DSS the following:

- DSS-8113, Wage Verification Form verifying RCA recipient employment wages, and
 - Part C of the DSS-5022 indicating the change.
4. **Documentation** - Workers must document case's actions in client's case note.

EXCEPTION:

If a refugee household reports a change of address and now resides in another county, **do not transfer the case.** Instead, continue to maintain the **RCA** case in the county of application.

Example:

The RCA recipient began working on April 4, 2019 and reported the change on April 6, 2019. The change was reported timely. The change should be in effect no later than the June payment.

Responsibility Belongs to	Action	Dates
	Date of change	04/04/19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCA Recipient • NC Refugee Service Provider 	+ Ten (10) calendar days	04/14/19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSS 	+ Ten (10) working days from date of DSS-8110	04/28/19
	Effective the following month	05/2019
	First month of overpayment	06/2019

B. The RCA recipient is responsible for reporting changes. A change in situation must be reported within ten (10) calendar days of when the change is known.

C. The NC Refugee Service Provider must complete Part C of DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice and submit the form to the DSS within ten (10) calendar days of learning of the change. Changes are effective the month after the month in which the 10-day notice expires unless the family unit waives the **10-day notice.** Follow instructions in WFCA Section 202.

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NOTE: RCA applicants/recipients must receive Timely notice of a reduction or termination of benefits.

After change has been evaluated in NC FAST, the DSS must complete Part D of DSS-5022, Refugee Work Registration Certification, Employment/Refusal and Termination/Denial Notice and a DSS-8110, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance and return the forms to the NC Refugee Service Provider.

- D.** Verify the change according to the verification procedures in the Work First Manual. Always document the change and verification on DSS-1662D, Verification of Change in Situation Form. See Section 202 of NC Work First Manual, Figure 1 for an example.
- E.** For income changes, See Section 114, Income and Budgeting, of the NC Work First Manual.
- F.** Manually send DSS-8110, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance to notify the household how the change affects their benefits. If the cash assistance terminates, transfer to RMA without a separate RMA determination for the remainder of the 8-month eligibility period for refugee assistance.
- G.** **Documentation** - Workers must document case activity in the client's case note.

VII. REVIEW

At the end of the refugee's eighth month in the US, terminate RCA assistance. A review notice is not necessary. Instead, evaluate to determine if the refugee(s) is eligible for any other assistance and take the necessary applications or refer to the appropriate agency. Manually send a DSS-8110, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance. In addition to notification of termination, inform the refugees that they may be eligible for other programs. See Section 264 of the NC Work First Manual for more information regarding these programs.

VIII. NOTICE AND HEARINGS PROCESS

- A.** All applicants and recipients of RCA must be provided an opportunity for a hearing to contest adverse determinations.
 - The refugee may have a representative, as well as a translator/interpreter, attend the hearing.
 - The hearing decision must be provided in a language the refugee can understand or have translated/interpreted into such a language.
- B.** A hearing need not be granted when RCA is terminated because the eligibility time period (8 months) imposed by law has been reached.

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IX. OVERPAYMENTS AND UNDERPAYMENTS

Agencies must ensure recovery of overpayments and correction of underpayments. If a refugee received an underpayment of benefits, take the following steps to issue the lost benefit amount to the refugee.

1. Document the case record.
 2. Issue restored benefits within thirty (30) days of the discovery.
- A.** If a refugee received an overpayment of benefits take the following steps:
1. Contact the local affiliate, if applicable.
 2. Verify the information that causes the change in benefits, i.e., wages, other income, household composition.
 3. Determine the overpayment amount.
 4. Request the refugee household repay the overpayment by:
 - a. paying a lump sum for the total amount of the overpayment, or
 - b. paying cash installments – obtain a signed repayment agreement from the household stating the payments amounts and frequency of payment.
- B.** County Responsible Overpayments (CROP). If a county is responsible for an overpayment (Agency Error - AE), the overpayment must be reported and recouped by the state office for adjustment to comply with program regulations. For programs like RCA that are not a part of NC FAST Enterprise Program Integrity (EPI), a county must take the following steps to report the overpayment:
1. Submit a completed a DSS-8201, County Responsible Overpayment to the Controller’s Office when a County Responsible Overpayment (CROP) is identified.
 2. The Controller’s Office will then enter the CROP adjustment into NC FAST, manually.
 3. The DSS-8201, County Responsible Overpayment form is located on the NC DHHS forms website. A link to the form is <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/forms/dss-8201-county-responsible-overpayment>

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- C. State Responsible Overpayments (SROP), a county must take the following steps to report the overpayment:
1. Notify the Controller's Office in writing by sending a letter to the Refugee program staff for approval. Do not use the DSS-8201 Form .
 2. Once approved by Refugee program staff, the request can be forwarded to the Controller's Office.
 3. The Controller's Office will enter the SROP adjustment into NC FAST manually.

X. RECIPIENT FRAUD AND ABUSE

Refugee Assistance is not considered a program of public assistance under N. C. G. S. 108A-24; therefore, fraud cases must be prosecuted under N. C. G. S. 14-100, "False Pretense and Cheats." Follow procedures in Section 207 of the NC Work First Manual.

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