



CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

DATE: May 01, 2018
MANUAL: WORK FIRST MANUAL
CHANGE NO.: 1-2018
TO: County Directors of Social Services
EFFECTIVE: June 1, 2018

I. BACKGROUND

This Change Notice provides notification of revision to Work First Manual Section 205, Payment Rules and Benefit Issuance. The revision includes changes to issuance procedures for Work First cash assistance payments, integration of policy guidance from DSS Administrative Letter 3-2013, removes references to legacy systems and Medicaid Assistance, incorporates NC FAST processes and includes new and revised program forms. The revision also includes the repositioning of content, language adjustments and other grammatical changes.

II. SPECIFIC CHANGES

A. Section I, Determination of Case Nominee/Payee for Work First Cash Assistance

1. Additional policy language regarding minor parents.
2. An individual cannot be the nominee/payee for more than one Work First case.
3. An adult or child cannot receive Work First in more than one case in North Carolina or from any other state for the same month.

B. Section II, Work First Protective Payee

1. Addition of the following conditions which require a protective payee;
 - a. an adult caretaker that does not comply with the Substance Use/Mental Health Initiative without good cause and
 - b. accessing the cash assistance on an EBT card in a prohibited location.
2. Refer to NC FAST instructions to add a protective payee to the Product Delivery Case.

C. Section III, Selecting the Payment Issuance Method

1. There are two methods of payment issuance, Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and Direct Deposit, for the cash assistance case.
2. The worker must provide the Frequently Asked Questions flyer and the EBT

- brochure to participants.
3. The chosen issuance method cannot change until the next review unless deemed appropriate by the county agency.

D. Section IV, Electronic Benefits Transfer

The EBT card can be used at retail vendors and designated Automated Teller Machines.

1. WF 205. IV.A, EBT Card Selection
 - a. The participant receives a system generated EBT card and card carrier.
 - b. The initial EBT Cash Card must be processed by the county agency.
2. WF 205. IV.B, EBT Issuance for Combined Work First Cash and Food and Nutrition Cases
 - a. The cash assistance will issue on the existing FNS EBT card when the nominee/payee is the same for FNS and Work First Cash.
 - b. If the nominee/payee is different, the cash assistance will issue on a EBT CASH card.
3. WF 205. IV.C, EBT Benefits Not Received
 - a. The nominee/payee must contact the EBT Customer Service Line if the card is lost or stolen.
 - b. The worker must resolve any discrepancies for a returned EBT card.
 - c. Cash assistance benefits accessed from an EBT card with a valid PIN are not replaceable.
4. WF 205. IV.D, EBTEdge

EBTEdge provides online access to EBT services for cardholders and allows county agencies to complete EBT related administrative tasks.

5. WF 205. IV.E, Inactive EBT Accounts and Expunged Benefits
 - a. After an EBT account is inactive for 365 days the benefits are expunged from the EBT card and cannot be restored.
 - b. Notify the case nominee/payee when the EBT account shows 90 days of inactivity.
 - c. The Aged Authorization Detail Report lists EBT accounts that have 30, 60 and 90 days of inactivity.
6. WF 205. IV.F, Restrictions on EBT Card Usage
 - a. The misuse of EBT card benefits is against the law and may result in program penalties or sanctions.
 - b. An EBT card cannot be used in any liquor store; any casino, gambling casino, gaming establishment or any retail establishment which provides adult-oriented entertainment.

E. Section V, Direct Deposit

The second method for benefit issuance is Direct Deposit to a personal bank account; checking or savings.

1. WF 205.V.A, Direct Deposit Authorization
 - a. The case nominee/payee must complete the DSS-5023, Direct Deposit Authorization Form.
 - b. Retain all direct deposit forms as part of the case documentation.
2. WF 205.V.B, Direct Deposit Processing
 - a. There is a three-day bank processing period when direct deposit is initially established in NC FAST.
 - b. The availability of funds for a new application may take an additional three to five business days.
 - c. The cash assistance payment for Work First Benefits cases is available the following month after verification of program compliance.
3. WF 205. V.C, Direct Deposit Transactions That Are Rejected or Not Received
 - a. NC FAST will send the caseworker a task with a reason for the returned payment. The worker must research and correct any discrepancies.
 - b. Once deposited into the payee's bank account, the funds are not replaceable by the Work First Program.

F. Section VI, Fees Associated with the Method of Issuance

1. Fees imposed by a financial institution associated with a deposit account are the responsibility of the owner of the account.
2. Fee information related to EBT card transactions is outlined as well as procedures for fee disputes.

G. Section VII, Changes in Situation

1. The participant must report changes to the deposit account, head of household and any other changes which may affect the delivery pattern.
2. Complete the Request to Cancel Direct Deposit form to end direct deposit for the identified account.
3. A separate EBT CASH card must be created when the head of household is no longer the same for the Work First cash assistance and FNS cases.

H. Section VIII, Returning Unspent Funds

1. Request the protective payee to return unspent Work First funds.
2. The head of household may choose to voluntarily return the monthly cash assistance when requesting case termination.
3. Return funds collected to the DHHS Controller's Office.
4. Verify receipt of the funds by viewing DHRWFA CA ADJUSTMENT SUMMARY WF38 (Report ID: W59).

I. Section IX, Benefit Issuance for Cases in Sanction

Once the sanctioned case comes into compliance, end date the sanction evidence in NC FAST.

J. NC FAST Processing Deadline

The program cut off or keying deadline for NC FAST is the second to last business day of the month. Additional time may be needed when changing a payment delivery pattern.

K. Payment for a Deceased Case Nominee/Payee

1. Contact the remaining family members to request the return of any funds for which the household is not entitled.
2. Provide the family with a receipt or other document for the returned funds.
3. If the funds are not returned, refer the case to the Program Integrity Unit.
4. Refer to the NC FAST Job Aid, Death of a Cash Assistance Client, for additional instructions.

III. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

This policy is effective June 1, 2018. Apply this policy to applications, reviews and changes in situation initiated on or after June 1, 2018.

County agencies will be notified, via listserv message, when the forms referenced in this policy section are available for program use.

Please email any questions regarding this policy to the Economic and Family Services Operational Support Team (ES OST) via DSS.Policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services
Division of Social Services

DL/sdm

Attachment:
[WF 205](#)