
WORK FIRST
Cash Assistance Recertification Process and Procedures

Change # 1-2019

December 31, 2019

201 – CASH ASSISTANCE RECERTIFICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES
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I. RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Counties must ensure that families who continue to receive Work First Cash Assistance are eligible and receive the correct amount of **benefits**. Eligibility for ongoing cash **benefits** must be **reviewed and recertified based on this policy section**. Counties may establish their own schedules within the following minimum requirements for when a redetermination for eligibility must be conducted.

Work First recertifications must be processed within 60 calendar days prior to the last day of the current certification period. When the last day of the current certification period is a holiday or weekend, the recertification must be processed no later than the prior business day before the holiday or weekend for the current certification period. To comply with the mandated recertification performance measure, 95% of Work First recertifications must be processed within the specified timeliness. Recertifications are considered processed timely when the participant is interviewed, and the recertification process is completed in NC FAST within 60 calendar days prior to the end of the current certification period.

- A. **At a minimum, case managers must conduct a face-to-face interview for each review and recertification based on the below policies:**
1. For **Work First Benefit cases a recertification is required** once every 12 months.
 2. For **child-only cases, within 6 months of the date of application and once every 12 months after the initial 6-month recertification.**

The recertification Appointment Notice ([DSS-8189](#)) must be sent to the participant within 30 to 60 days before the last day of the current certification period.

The recertification must be completed by the case manager and the participant before the last workday of the current certification month unless good cause exists and is documented. Failure to complete the recertification before the last workday of the current certification month by the participant without good cause, makes the entire family ineligible for a Work First Cash Assistance benefit for one month or until compliance, whichever is later. For more information regarding the ineligibility or sanction period, see Section III below.

The family may re-apply for Work First during the month of ineligibility, but eligibility can begin no earlier than the first of the month following the month of ineligibility. The month of ineligibility is considered the month following the current certification period. A face-to-face interview must be conducted, and eligibility re-determined at a minimum of every 12 months.

If the participant reapplies after the month of ineligibility, the case is considered a reapplication. [See Work First Manual Section 104](#) for Application Process and Procedures.

The case manager must provide or arrange for appropriate accommodations for families with limited English proficiency or with disabilities to ensure recertifications are conducted as scheduled.

- B. A Work First Cash Assistance recertification requires the case manager to complete the following actions:
1. Notify the family of the recertification appointment using the Appointment Notice (DSS-8189) as directed in the Cash Assistance Recertification Job Aid.
 2. Complete the Work First Cash Assistance Application and Review Documentation Workbook (DSS-8228) with the case head/payee and obtain a signature. All questions must be addressed and a response documented.
 3. Provide the case head/payee with the [DSS-8146A](#) for any pending information.
 4. Have the case head/payee sign, a **Core Requirements MRA** ([DSS-6963A](#)). In addition to the **case head/payee**, all adults included in the case must sign an MRA-A Core Requirements . [See Work First Manual Section 103](#).
 5. Verify and document all immunizations/medical checkups are current. The **case head/payee** is responsible for providing documentation at each recertification that the children in their care, who receive assistance, are receiving the required immunizations and health screenings.
 6. Verify and document children's school attendance and progress. The participant's statement can be used unless questionable. [See Work First Manual Section 103](#)
 7. Document the family's statement regarding individual criminal violations by having the **case head/payee** sign and date the **Individual Criminal Violations Declaration Statement** ([DSS-5271](#)). If there is a reason to question the family's written statement, case managers may seek additional verification. [See Work First Manual Section 104](#).
 8. **Complete a substance use screening at each recertification. The case manager must complete the Audit/DAST-10 screening tool. If any required case head refuses or fails to complete the screening, document the case record. The case head will be ineligible to receive Work First. Continue with the eligibility determination process for the remaining household members.**
 9. Using the Notification of the Family Violence Option ([DSS-6966](#)), inform the participant of the definition of family violence and the right to request a waiver. If the participant refuses to sign the notification, note on the form the refusal to sign.

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- Give a copy to the participant and file the original in the case record. There is no penalty for failure to sign. [See Work First Manual Section 104D.](#)
10. Verify and inform the family of the number of months remaining on their state and federal (24 and 60 month) time limits. Inform them of their right to request an extension or a hardship exemption. [See Work First Manual Section 105.](#)
 11. Review the documentation of kinship in the case record and **verify the kinship**. If the applicant's statement was accepted at application and has not yet been verified by another means, require third party verification at recertification. If the kinship requirement was met by legal custody or guardianship of the child(ren), obtain the adult's written statement at each recertification that the legal custody or guardianship status is still valid. [See Work First Manual Section 112.](#)
 12. Review the family cap provision with every family at each recertification. [See Work First Manual Section 106.](#)
 13. Review the minor parent rules with families that include a minor parent and document the situation. [See Work First Manual Section 107](#)
 14. Review the case record for documentation of children's ages **and verify the ages**. If a child's age was verified by the applicant's statement at application, obtain third-party verification at recertification. [See Work First Manual Section 109.](#)
 15. Ensure that the social security number of each individual included on the case has been verified. **Document the verification of each number for each family member who had to apply for a number or apply for a duplicate card at application.** Unless the family member provides the number or applies for one, the family member cannot receive Work First Cash Assistance. [See Work First Manual Section 110.](#)
 16. **Review the citizenship and identity documents in the case record.** Obtain documentation for citizenship and identity if the case record does not contain documentation. Document the family's statement as to whether there have been any changes in immigrant status **for family members.** [See Work First Manual Section 111](#)
 17. Verify that the child(ren) is (are) living with the **case head/payee** through collateral contacts or by making a home visit where **it is evident** that the child lives in the home. [See Work First Manual Section 112.6.](#)
 18. Verify Income. [See Work First Manual Section 114.](#)
 19. Verify Resources. [See Work First Manual Section 115.](#)

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20. Explain the **Recipient's Rights and Responsibilities** ([NCFAST-20009](#)). The case manager and the participant must sign the NCFAST-20009.
21. **Complete the following online matches via OVS:**
 - ESC
 - BENDEX
 - SDX
 - DOC

Refer to **FAST Help Cash Assistance Recertification Job Aid** for guidance.
22. Sign, and have the case head/payee sign the [DSS-8228](#).
23. Key the recertification as directed in the **Cash Assistance Recertification Job Aid**. The case manager must enter the date of the interview in the "Date Received" field and "in-Person" in the "Method" field. The case manager will then manage the Evidence Dashboard to determine eligibility for ongoing assistance.

II. PENALTY FOR A FAMILY THAT DOES NOT COMPLETE THE RECERTIFICATION

Families who fail to appear for the face-to-face recertification interview or otherwise allow case managers to complete the periodic eligibility recertification without good cause (a significant family crisis or change, illness or disability or the caretaker or child; or civil leave, including jury duty, or a required court appearance), are **ineligible for Work First Cash Assistance for one month and/or until compliance**. The case manager must key a sanction and terminate the case. The family may reapply at any time. However, the case manager cannot approve the application with a benefit effective date earlier than the month after the month of ineligibility. Refer to the **FAST Help Creating a Sanction Job Aid** for guidance.

III. VERIFYING AND DOCUMENTING THE FAMILY'S ELIGIBILITY

The [DSS-8228](#) must be used at the **Work First Cash Assistance** recertification. Upon completion of the face-to-face recertification interview, the case manager must review all program forms and documents provided for verification to ensure they comply with Work First program and policy requirements.