



## REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

ITEM NO. 23

**DATE OF MEETING:** December 14, 2009

**REQUESTED BY:** Dr. Reta M. Shiver, Director, Department of Social Services

**SHORT TITLE:** Resolution Approving Child Support Enforcement Transition Plan

**BACKGROUND:** NC General Assembly directed each State operated Child Support Enforcement Office to be administered by county government effective July 1, 2010. Social Services is the Pender County entity serving as lead contact during the transition process. During its October 5, 2009 meeting the Pender County Board of County Commissioners granted approval for the Pender County Department of Social Services administer the Child Support Enforcement Program.

**SPECIFIC ACTION REQUESTED:** The Board is requested to approve the Child Support Enforcement Transition Plan.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

Respectfully recommend approval.

JB  
Initial

**RESOLUTION**

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Pender County Board of Commissioners that

the Pender County Department of Social Services Child Support Enforcement Program Transition Plan be approved. The County Manager is authorized to execute any/all documents necessary to implement the resolution.

**AMENDMENTS:**

MOVED \_\_\_\_\_ SECONDED \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DENIED \_\_\_\_\_ UNANIMOUS

YEA VOTES: Tate \_\_\_ Brown \_\_\_ Blanchard \_\_\_ Rivenbark \_\_\_ Williams \_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jimmy T. Tate, Chairman      December 14, 2009  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST      December 14, 2009  
Date

*Pender County Department*

*of*

*Social Services*

Child Support Enforcement Transition Plan

presented to

*Pender County Board*

*of*

*County Commissioners*

December 14, 2009

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## PENDER COUNTY CSE TRANSITION PLAN

### 1. Organizational Model for the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Program

On August 16, 2009, Pender County Commissioners voted unanimously to assign Child Support administration to the Department of Social Services. The basis for this decision stemmed from (1) reports from other DSS agencies that have operated the CSE program under contract as well as a DSS program (2) a comparative analysis of Pender County to the surrounding counties (and the State overall) utilizing the 9-Factor Report of collections and arrears payments (3) Pender County's rank based upon the 9-Factor Report (4) costs-benefits analysis, and (5) Reports from the current CSE staff in Pender County who administer the program as a State agency.

The Pender County Department of Social Services consists of the DSS Director and Administrative Officer who oversee 92 staff. 42 staff administer "services" managed by 1 Social Work Program Manager; and 50 staff, managed by 1 Income Maintenance Administrator operate "income maintenance" programs. 6 Child Support staff will have been added to the Department of Social Services as of July 1, 2010. The agency is divided into units as follows:

Administration (Director, Administrative Officer, Social Work Program Manager, Income Maintenance Administrator, Accounting & Mail Technicians, and Receptionists).

Adult Services (Supervisor and 6 Social Workers).

Children Services (Adoptions, Foster Care, Child Protective Services).

Supportive Services (Day Care, Transportation).

Food & Nutrition Services (Food Stamps, Program Integrity).

Medicaid ( Adult Medicaid, and Family & Children's Medicaid).

Work First (Cash Assistance, and Services).

Child Support Enforcement (Collections & Enforcement).

(See attached Organizational Chart)

To ensure that there is no disruption in services for citizens, during the month of March 2010, Pender County DSS will advertise positions necessary for operating the CSE office. Existing Child Support Staff will have the opportunity to apply for the positions. Applicants hired by Pender County Department of Social Services to administer the CSE program effective July 1,

2010 will be selected and notified by May 1, 2010 (60 days prior to the effective date of the transition) with the understanding that their employment with DSS begins July 1, 2010. Should there be reassignments within CSE, staff would have time to make adjustments and adaptations.

## **2. Office Space/Facility**

Pender County CSE office will be housed in the 2,364 square feet building currently occupied by the State Child Support Enforcement office. The building, located at 305 South Walker Street, contains 8 private offices, 2 rest-rooms, 1 kitchen/break room, 1 reception area, 1 waiting area, 1 conference room and 1 LAN room. The building is approximately 12 years old, is in excellent condition, and the lesser has agreed to lease the building to DSS at the same amount of the current lease agreement with the State. The building is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities regulations and meets the standards described in Administrative Procedure Rules. Two physical barriers to tax data include (1) the door between the lobby and offices which is locked at all times and (2) all file cabinets are locked. Additionally, a tax sensitive information destruction log is maintained for all tax data that is destroyed. Child Support "only" staff will occupy the building and no unauthorized persons shall share copiers, printers, or other equipment. The building's owners have provided a letter of intention (see attached) as a gentlemen's agreement between 2 parties until the actual lease has been signed. The lease will be signed by both parties as soon as a release from the State can be obtained, but no later than May 31, 2010.

Currently, there is no electronic security system in place. However, the landlord has agreed to allow DSS to install the "Security Plus" system utilized by DSS and other Pender County agencies. Additionally, an outside security light will be installed on the parking lot to further ensure staff safety.

Finally, staff will have a "code word" to use to alert the entire office that intervention by supervisor is needed and/or 911 should be called.

Office hours are 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

## **3. Budget**

Administrative Officer will complete DSS-1571 on a monthly basis. Child Support Workers will be reported on Part IC as Function Code 79. IV-D Supervisor and Clerical Support will be reported as Function Code 86. Workers will complete day sheets to separate Work First related time from non-Work First related time. Administrative Costs will be reported on Part II of DSS-1571. Administrative Officer will ensure that expenses are allocated to appropriate program area. First year operating costs are as follows:

**Direct Program Costs**

Salaries (\$166,568), FICA (\$12,472), Retirement (\$9,994), Health Insurance (\$42,000), Attorney (\$25,000), Lab Services (\$6,000), Equipment Maintenance (\$1,500), Phone (\$2,000), Postage (\$5,000), General Office Supplies (\$2,000), Court Fees (\$4,000), Deputy (\$55,000).

**Total** \$364,144 x 66% = \$240,335 (to be reimbursed) first year operating costs.

**County Share = \$123,809**

Pender County will incur the following first year start up costs:

**Start Up Costs\*\***

All equipment including Fiber, cabling, IP Phones, DELL PC's and Laptops = \$34,777.

All furniture and other fixed assets will be donated to Pender County by the State.

**Total** \$34,777 x 66% = \$22,953 (to be reimbursed)

**County Share = \$11,824** (There might be some miscellaneous items omitted).

\*\* County will be reimbursed for all start up costs including reimbursement for staff time spent in preparation for implementation.

**4. Staffing/Positions**

In order to meet Child Support Program needs, the following actions will be taken:

- (a) The Child Support Supervisor will report directly to the Income Maintenance Administrator, as do Medicaid, F&NS, and Work First Supervisors.
- (b) One clerk, in addition to other duties, will be solely responsible for taking all Child Support-related telephone calls. These calls will be directed to a designated telephone line. There will be a back-up or support clerk to substitute in CS clerk's absence. One Deputy will meet with CS agency and serve documents.
- (c) Pender anticipates a caseload of approximately 2000 cases to be divided among 3 Child Support Agents, giving each agent slightly more than 650 cases each.
- (d) DSS will advertise positions in the month of March 2010. The selection process consists of advertising, interviewing, reference checks, and appointment to the position. All staff positions will be filled by May 1, 2010, or 60 days before the July 1<sup>st</sup> start up date. Selections will be made and staff will know that the positions become effective July 1, 2010.

## **5. Office Furnishings and Equipment**

State will transfer existing furniture and equipment from the State CSE office to the county office. This includes:

### **Equipment**

- 7 computers and monitors
- 2 State printers
- 1 Supervisor printer
- 1 Fax machine
- 1 Postage machine
- 1 Copier
- 1 shredder
- 1 Telephone system with 9 base units

### **Office Furniture**

- 6 Staff desks and chairs
- 6 Computer tables
- 2 Printer tables
- 4 Miscellaneous desks and chairs
- 2 Conference Tables
- 1 Large supply cabinet
- 2 Book cases
- 31 Metal locked file cabinets

### **State Network**

- 1 Server system

### **Computer Support**

- Cisco Enterprise-class VOIP telephony call processing system

DSS does not need to include in the capital outlay line item funds to cover CSE furniture and equipment.

## **6. Legal Services**

Child Support Enforcement will confer with the Attorney in preparing for paternity trials and presentation of cases in court. CSE Court is held once per month during which time the Attorney determines who testifies, and how cases will be presented. A specific clerk designated as the official record keeper will prepare payment histories for court, provide a court calendar and ensure that cases are readily available for judges. Payment plans and obligations will be negotiated with obligors and attorneys. Appropriate court orders will be prepared on site as needed, and accurate notes of orders and information necessary for the court docket will be maintained.

One attorney will handle CSE cases in court on the second Monday of each month. The attorney's performance will be monitored by the Income Maintenance Administrator, in conjunction with the CSE Supervisor as cases are reviewed and during case planning.

Legal papers will be served by a deputy from the Sheriff's Department per agreement by the Sheriff and DSS Director.

DSS has collaborated with the clerk of court for many years through other programs, mostly Child Protective Services. Communication has always been excellent with the clerk as well as district court judges. Expectations are that professional relations will remain high.

#### **7. Security**

The CSE building located at 305 South Walker Street currently does not contain security lights on the parking lot. A security light will be installed. The building itself is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities regulations and meets the standards described in Administrative Procedures Rules. Two physical barriers to tax data include (1) the door between the lobby and offices is locked at all times, and (2) all file cabinets are locked.

The Pender County Information Technology Services (ITS) Department manages and supports a Cisco enterprise-class VOIP telephony call processing system which enables Pender County to meet the communication needs of all users, and serve customers very efficiently. The system is able to leverage Cisco's Architecture for Voice, Video, and Integrated Data (AVVID) throughout the existing network infrastructure. Pender County uses a combination of the Cisco 7900 series IP phones, such as the 7911, 7940, and 7960 throughout all county departments. These IP phones support access to multiple telephone lines and include high-quality, hands-free speakerphone capability and built in headset connectivity. With a large pixel-based display, these IP phones provide supplemental information, access to applications, and make it easy to use available telephone features.

Pender County utilizes the services of "Security Plus" for monitoring all building activity. This system will be installed at the Child Support Enforcement office.

#### **8. Program Performance**

Utilizing Data Warehouse and XPTR, reports are reviewed and assessed. The OSCE 157 Report is the primary report that gives an overview of performance. An additional report comes from Raleigh on a monthly basis indicating "federal incentive scores" for the prior month. Complete and reliable data in calculating performance measures are indicated by (1) Paternity Establishment Percentages (2) Cases Under Order Percentages (3) Collections to Current Support Percentages (4) Collections to Arrears Percentages. Supervisor utilizes statistics from Data Warehouse and XPTR to conduct performance evaluations. Quality case

reviews are conducted on a monthly basis. Second party reviews and evaluation of employee workplans by the IM Administrator will provide an added measure of program evaluation.

Pender County will increase the telephone interview process and decrease the number of office interviews. This will expedite the establishment process, thereby improving time-frames and federal incentive scores.

#### **9. Staff Training**

Staff will be trained utilizing all Computer Based Training that is offered. The supervisor will conduct Phase One training for all new staff. This training is ongoing. Phases Two through Four will be provided by State CSE Section supervisors. Periodically, State training is offered in Raleigh or at some central location. This satisfies the State's ongoing training effort, especially when manual material is revised due to programmatic changes. Staff will attend these training sessions whenever they occur. The Regional Child Support Enforcement Local Business Liaison will conduct training and/or answer questions as required. Existing supervisory staff has extensive knowledge of the Child Support Enforcement Program and will be able to train any CSE staff in a new role.

#### **10. Public Relations**

Pender County CSE Consumers will be notified of the administrative changes of the Child Support Office from State-run to County-run through numerous measures.

(1) Flyers will be developed and disseminated to consumers from key locations including the CSE office, DSS office, and the Court house. (2) Announcements will be given to the media noting that the program, even though DSS administered, will operate from the same physical address/location. (3) Any changes in telephone access will be indicated in announcements and flyers. (4) A specific telephone number will be posted for CSE-related questions. (5) Public Service Announcements will be given to all local media (television, newspapers and radio).

#### **11. Key Partners**

Pender County DSS enjoys excellent rapport with other public and private agencies and has worked with key community stakeholders in various other programs. These include Work First, Partnership for Children, District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Department, Head Start, Migrant Resource Office, Safe Schools/Healthy Students Committee, Employment Security Commission and the Joblink Center, LINC, East Coast Solutions and Southeastern Mental Health, Four County Community Services, and Pender Adult Services among others. DSS and CSE have collaborated successfully over the years on an ongoing basis which should make the transition much easier, smoother, and less stressful for both entities. All agencies mentioned serve as mutual partners and this new structure should serve to strengthen existing partnerships.

Pender County Department of Social Services is located at 810 South Walker Street. Child Support Enforcement is located at 305 South Walker Street, a physical separation of approximately 5 blocks or 3/4 mile. The Mail Clerk will deliver all CSE mail daily once agency mail has been sorted. The Income Maintenance Administrator will meet periodically with the CSE supervisor (and sometimes supervisor and staff) on location at the Child Support Office. Once per month DSS holds staff meeting with the entire staff. CSE staff will join these meetings whenever possible.

The DSS Management Team includes the DSS Director and all supervisors. The team meets monthly unless there is a need to hold a special meeting before the next monthly meeting. During these sessions, supervisors share concerns, changes, and pertinent information relative to their respective programs with the group. This practice has proven to be quite successful for DSS. Adding the CSE supervisor to the team should enhance communication overall. Work First, Child Welfare, Medicaid and CSE began meeting and exchanging information early on in 2008. These periodic sessions will continue in as much as this practice builds stronger professional relationships and improves service delivery to clients.

**12. Start Up Date**

Pender County will implement the CSE Program effective July 1, 2010. At the present time, we do not anticipate any obstacles will delay transition.

The Child Support Transition Plan approved by the \_\_\_\_\_

County Board of County Commissioners on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, County Commission Chairperson  
Signature of the Chairman of the County Commissioners

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of County CSE Transition Lead

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Pender County Department of Social Services

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

2009 - 2010

