

# CATAWBA COUNTY WORK FIRST PLAN



OCTOBER 2009- SEPTEMBER 2011

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## Work First

As has been the case in much of the nation, Catawba County's Work First program has been highly successful since its inception in 1995. Welfare roles have reduced from approximately 1,300 to only 240 as of August 2008. With less than one-half of one percent of Catawba County's population receiving Work First it is a time to celebrate, but more importantly, a time to move forward with a renewed vigor to satisfy the vision that all families in this community will assume personal responsibilities for themselves and their families and will have the resources needed to provide their basic needs – shelter, food, medical attention, and clothing.

The philosophy of this Work First Plan incorporates quality values and organizational standards that reflect respect for the worth and dignity of each and every citizen. It is a belief that everyone can and will move to independence, that everyone wishes to work and support his/her own family, and that every job has meaning and purpose. It is a belief that everyone has the desire to achieve: an education for themselves and their children that will enable them to compete in the employment market where they can be employed at living wages; building assets in order to possibly have home ownership; meeting their medical needs; quality life choices that lessens the likelihood of welfare dependency, unplanned pregnancies, substance abuse, and other behaviors that are disruptive to the individual and family. It is our plan to have long-term successful family and child well-being outcomes for the entire Work First population.

It is the intent of Catawba County's Work First Plan to address each and every one of the issues in order to provide counseling or connection with the source of help so that each individual Work First family will be able to realize their dreams. In order to do that, this Plan is as related to real-life as possible. The real world and real employment environment expects people who are able-bodied to work, but is also willing to give each and every individual the proper tools to become self-sufficient.

We believe that can best be done through "Electing" status, in which the local citizens have a greater opportunity to shape the program in ways that are unique to meeting local needs. If that occurs, Work First in Catawba County will truly remain as it was intended to be - an emergency help center where people without resources may receive temporary help but then move on to self-sufficiency. The Plan's intent is to do just that.

## I. Conditions within the County

- Only 556 of Catawba County's 153,784 citizens receive Work First. That is less than half of 1 percent of the population. (<http://quickfacts.census.gov>)
- There were 251 families receiving Work First in August 2008. Of these 170 included no adult in the assistance payment and 81 included one or two adults with a child or children.
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of Catawba County's Work First cases include only one child.
- The racial heritage of families receiving Work First is 53% Caucasian, 32% African-American, 6% Asian, 6% Hispanic, and 3% Other.
- Approximately 54.9% of the children in the Work First caseload have a valid child support order. The average child support is \$126.20 per month. However, the collection rate for Work First families is only 42.3%.
- Just under, one half (43%) of the cases receive assistance six months or less.
- Work First recipients face many barriers to employment, which include: medical problems that preclude or limit their employment and serious mental or psychological problems.
- Transportation is another major barrier. Even if the family has a car, the car is often in poor repair.

Catawba County had an unemployment rate of 8.1% in July 2008 while the State's rate was 6.6%. The labor force in June was 76,486 ([www.ncesc.com](http://www.ncesc.com)). The ranks of the 'working poor' in Catawba County are swelling. The county has historically been characterized by its dependency on manufacturing. Recent statistics reveal that 11,227 persons in the county are employed by the furniture industry (or 12.9% of the entire workforce). 3,572 persons in the county are employed by the textile industry (or 5.1% of the entire workforce). 2,868 persons in the county are employed by the fiber optics industry (or 3.0% of the entire workforce). These three manufacturing industries combine to employ 17,667 persons in the county (or 31.7% of the entire workforce). That represents a -37.3% drop in manufacturing jobs when compared to the same period of 2000 for the county (Summer 2008 issue of Economic Indicators Newsletter published by the WPCG). Many of these manufacturing plants have seen a slow down with the recession resulting in layoffs, shortened workweeks and plant closings.

The lost manufacturing jobs are being replaced with jobs that pay significantly less. The majority of the available jobs are in the service industries and involves night and weekend work, as well as rotating shifts/days. This type of scheduling makes childcare and transportation very difficult to coordinate. Two centers are currently offering second shift care and one of these centers that offer second shift care is licensed for third shift, but does not currently accept children – waiting on staff to be hired. Thirteen licensed homes are providing second shift care and twelve licensed homes are providing third shift care. Weekend care has proven to be a hardship on the licensed homes and acceptance of children has transitioned to a case-by-case process. The Children's Resource Center currently shows data from providers that reflect eight FCCH's that are willing to provide Saturday care and seven that will provide occasional Sunday care. Helping families locate safe and affordable childcare to meet the needs of irregular work schedules is imperative to continued success of the program.

The bulk of employment growth will be in the following areas:

- Sales and Related Occupations
- Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations
- Office and Administrative Support Occupations
- Healthcare and Technical Occupations
- Trucking and Warehouse Occupations

Public transportation is not available throughout the county. No public transportation is available outside of the extended workday. Buses do not run on Sundays. Many areas of the county are miles from the nearest employer or child care center. For these families, the lack of transportation is a major barrier to self-sufficiency. Public transportation needs to become more flexible to meet the needs of this population.

### **Mission Statement**

To enable Work First recipients and applicants to become and remain self-sufficient by linking them with resources and skills, and to allow them to take responsibility for themselves and their families.

### **Vision Statement**

All Catawba County families will demonstrate personal responsibility and will have the resources needed to meet their basic needs – food, clothing, shelter, and medical care.

## **II. The Planning Process**

### **A. Planning Committee**

The State of North Carolina submits a State TANF Plan to the federal Department of Health and Human Services every two years. The State Plan describes North Carolina's TANF Program, called Work First. The State Plan is an aggregate of the standard Work First Program and the various Electing County Plans that have been approved by the General Assembly.

The Social Services system in North Carolina is county-administered and state-supervised. The State Division of Social Services establishes the standard Work First Program according to guidelines contained in federal regulations and state law, allowing counties maximum local flexibility.

Each county develops a county Work First Block Grant plan that describes their plans for administering the program in response to local needs and situations.

State law requires all counties to submit county Work First Block Grant plans to the Department of Health and Human Services on a biennial schedule. This plan will be for October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2011. The Board of County Commissioners approves county plans.

The planning process is an opportunity for counties to take full advantage of the local flexibility built into the Work First Program. It is the time to strengthen local partnerships and tap into local creativity to move low-income families into self-sufficiency.

Catawba County Board of County Commissioners voted for Catawba County to pursue Electing County Status. In prior years, there were numerous advantages to being an Electing County. Electing Counties are given greater flexibility in establishing eligibility policies (who is eligible to receive assistance and under what conditions). However, through the years, the state has gradually adapted the state plan to mirror the policies recommended by counties vying for Electing Status. At this time, the primary advantage for Catawba County pursuing Electing County status is that it keeps the option open until critical information is received from the state regarding funding opportunities. Counties that submit Electing plans may request a change to Standard planning status by submitting a request before April 1, 2009, with documentation that a three-fifths majority of the Board of County Commissioners support the redesignation.

The Board of County Commissioners is required to appoint a committee to oversee the planning effort. The members of the Committee and the groups they represent are:

- Tom Richards – Public Health Board Member
- Glenn Barger - Catawba County Commissioner and Social Services Board Member
- Eddie Daniel – Local School System (Principal of Challenger High School)
- Joyce Watson – HRD Director, Catawba Valley Community College
- Ron Valentini – Catawba Valley Community College VP Workforce Development and Instruction
- Donna Gilbert – JobLink Manager
- Barbara Degen – Legal Aid of North Carolina

- Ed Clifford – Director of the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority
- Claude Catlin – Child Care Supervisor
- Patricia Holcombe – Child Support Supervisor
- Ann Peele – Family Guidance Center
- Henry Steele – Vocational Rehabilitation Manager
- Mary Patton – Goodwill Industries Manager
- Malle Vue – Goodwill Industries Job Placement Counselor
- Allan Mackie – Employment Security Commission Manager
- Gloria DeVane – Employment Security Commission Job Placement Counselor/ NAACP
- Joy Mease – Social Security Administration
- Mark Powers – Family Net (QPSA)
- Patricia Meredith – Family Net
- Melissa Cline - LME
- Pete Miller – Business and Workforce Development Board Representative
- Trudy Logan – Prevention Unit Supervisor
- Cyndy Benson – Child Welfare Program Manager
- Roger Baker – Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry
- Tony Bunton – Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry
- Geraldine Dickens – Work First Participant
- Deandura Danner – Work First Participant
- Bobby Boyd – Social Services Director
- Karen Heffner – Work First Program Manager
- Beth Smith – Work First Lead Worker
- Jo Sloan – Family Support Division Administrator
- Gina Silva – Hispanic Representative

### **Public Comment**

The plan was made available for public review from September 22, 2008 through September 26, 2008. An article in the local newspapers, informed citizens that copies of the plan were available to citizens at the Catawba County Department of Social Services and at the JobLink Career Center. Accepting the input from local citizens and with the recommendation of the Planning Committee, the plan was formally approved by the Catawba County Board of Commissioners.

### **C. Planning Process**

On September 8, 2008, the Planning Committee meeting was held. At this meeting, local Social Services staff gave the committee members an overview of the current Work First Program. Demographic information on the current Work First population was shared with the group. A time line was developed for the project.

Prior to the committee meeting, all 251 Catawba County Work First families were surveyed by mail. The survey asked:

- What barriers are keeping you from becoming employed?

- What do you need in order to become employed?
- What services do you currently use from Social Services?
- What would you change about the Work First Program?
- What benefits/services of the Work First Program have helped you?
- If employed, what has helped you in keeping your job?
- What services do the children in the Work First grant need to help them be the best they can be?
- Any other comments?

## **Survey Results**

### Barriers to Employment

From the surveys, several issues were communicated frequently and emphatically. Health issues that prevent the adult from being employed (i.e. chronic pain, cancer, etc.), lack of training and transportation problems remain the biggest barriers to employment.

This survey was also sent to Catawba County's Child-Only case participants. These families frequently mentioned lack of funds for school supplies and a clothing allowance. (School supplies and clothing are provided on a case by case assessment)

### Services being provided

On a positive note, many families noted that they were working, or in training for employment, as a result of supportive services being provided by the Agency. As might be expected, Child Care, Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Transportation were highlighted as very important. Caretaker cases also mentioned their appreciation of the Legal Aid services they received under a contract funded by the County's TANF dollars.

### Ideas for Change

Families asked for an increase in the cash payments, the opportunity for more training/education, more flexibility in the required number of hours per week

The plan was developed following suggestions provided by the initial program guidelines, federal requirements, and local input. Each participant had a direct influence over the preparation of the proposal through contribution of data and information.

Catawba County's demonstrated record of commitment to children and families, collaborative strategic planning, risk taking and successful implementation of innovations makes this community a natural choice to continue being an Electing county. The successful track record includes efforts such as Catawba County TANF Housing Initiative, Work First Demonstration Grant, Work and Ride, Smart Start, JobLink Career Center, and Multiple Response System (Child Welfare Reform). Catawba County used the many lessons learned from previous efforts to design this project for families in need.

The Planning Committee developed a common vision for the plan based on a philosophy of respect for the worth and dignity of each individual in this community. Each individual has the right to self-determination, but is expected to be a contributing, self-supporting member of this

community. A system of supporting services and programs should be in place to encourage, motivate and empower individuals to move from dependency to self-sufficiency.

Welfare reform is a work in progress. The Boards of County Commissioners and Social Services will continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Work First Program on children and families in Catawba County and to recommend adjustments and refinements to the collaborative effort as needed. Members of the committee have pledged their support of the proposal and its implementation.

### III. Outcomes and Goals for the County

The Goal of the Catawba County Work First Program is to move Work First applicants and recipients to self-sufficiency by either enabling them to secure and maintain employment or by securing disability benefits.

#### A. Statewide Work First Goals and Performance Measures

Catawba County will adopt the goals established by the state for Catawba County. Those goals are expected to be:

- 1) **Meeting the Federal Participation Rates:** Active participation in federal countable work activities will lead to full time employment. Catawba County will maintain an “All Family” Participation Rate of 50% and a Two Parent Participation Rate of 90% in accordance with the Federal law.

State Recommended County Performance Measures (if the state is able to continue providing the statistics for these measures):

- 2) **Employment:** Self-sufficiency will be realized primarily through the employment of Work First citizens.
- 3) **Providing Employment Services:** Active participation in intensive employment services for all families is necessary in order to meet the participation rate and to ensure families are served adequately before the end of five years. One measure of success in Work First is the percentage of families who are subject to the work requirement that counties are assisting with job preparation and job placement.
- 4) **Benefit Diversion:** The most successful outcome possible is for an applicant to avoid the need to become a recipient.
- 5) **Staying off Welfare:** Efforts to reduce welfare rolls, help adults find jobs, and increase self-sufficiency are undermined when families return to welfare. Families leaving Work First because of a job are tracked to determine if they return to cash assistance.
- 6) **Job Retention:** Families who leave Work First for employment and continue to be employed 6 to 12 months after leaving the program show evidence of keeping their income and increased job stability, which impacts a family’s well-being.

#### B. County Developed Outcome Goals

- 1) **Customer Service:** 98% of Work First applicants and/or recipients will have a positive rating, which will be measured by a random sample customer satisfaction survey administered throughout the biennial years.
- 2) **Shared Cases:** 100% of shared cases (Work First cases that are also involved with Child Welfare) known to both staff will have mutually developed plans. This is true for both the traditional Work First cases, as well as the Caretaker cases. This assures that families have coordinated plans, not competing requests from the two programs. The staff and programs will support the family in their effort to become self-sufficient and to meet the needs of the children.
- 3) **Family Well-Being:** 100% of the Work First cases will be assessed regarding child well-being and appropriate information, referrals, and advocacy will be provided.

#### IV. Plans to Achieve the Outcomes and Goals

**1) Employment:** Work is the focus of the Work First Program. On the day of application, the Case Manager begins laying the foundation and ground rules for this program. The citizen is informed that Work First Cash assistance is considered short-term assistance and full time employment is the goal of the program.

**Activities:** Job Development and Placement provided by Employment Security Commission (ESC) staff at the Employment Security Commission. Human Resources Development, English as a Second Language, Graduate Equivalency Degree, Adult Basic Education, short term skills training such as EMT, Cosmetologist, Certified Nursing Assistant, etc provided by the local community college. Another program offered through the Community College is New Choices. The JobLink Career Center is hosted by CVCC.

**Supportive Services:** Daycare, transportation, participation expenses (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, uniforms, tuition and books, etc), child support, and Food Stamp assistance.

**2) Meeting Federal Participation Rates:** Catawba County will meet the All Parent participation rate through a combination of efforts.

**Activities:** On the day of the Work First application, the case manager will lay the foundation and ground rules for the program, with the primary focus being on personal responsibility and employment. Employment services (see # 3 below) are offered to all able-bodied adults. Catawba County Case Managers will provide Work First citizens with the full array of services, including developing appropriate Mutual Responsibility Agreements and closely monitoring progress as the citizen moves towards self-sufficiency. Case Managers will place all mandatory participants in appropriate countable Work First Activities such as Employment, Vocational Education Training, Work Experience, Job Search/Job Readiness, etc. All cases will be staffed with the supervisor at a minimum of once per month. Case Managers will also make referrals to community resources. The case managers will assure that all applicable cases are opened in EPIS (Employment Program Information System) each month and supervisors will monitor the employment services case management report and follow up if needed. Sanctions will be imposed swiftly when the participant is out of compliance with his/her Mutual Responsibility Agreement.

**Supportive Services:** Daycare, transportation, participation expenses (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, uniforms, tuition and books, etc) are provided to ensure that participants are able to complete the required number of hours in their assigned component(s).

**3) Providing Employment Services:** Citizens seeking employment will find a full array of services available to assist them.

**Activities:**

- Case Management provided by Social Services Staff
- Information and Referral
- Job Development and Placement provided by Employment Security Commission (ESC) staff at the Employment Security Commission
- Education and Training: Includes Human Resources Development and Pathways to Employment at Catawba Valley Community College. The community college also provides an ESL (English as a Second Language) program at multiple sites throughout the county, GED (Graduate Equivalency Degree), ABE (Adult Basic Education), and short term skills training such as Cosmetologist, EMT, etc. The community college has voiced its commitment to scheduling other short-term skills training programs as the needs are identified. Another program offered through the Community College is New Choices. The Job Link Career Center is hosted by the Community College
- Economic Literacy Training
- Participation Expenses (including Child Care and Transportation)
- Job Search -- A full range of services exist at the Employment Security Commission a short distance from Social Services.
- WIA Programs (Workforce Investment Act).
- Family Net (Mental Health services which are now part of Social Services)
- Substance Abuse services through Family Net and/or LME (Local Mental Entity)
- JobLink Career Center located a short distance from Social Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Temporary Agencies (will do testing as well as minimal training)
- Goodwill Industries (Catawba County's Sheltered Workshop)
- SUCCESS - working with WFFA families who have 30 or more months used on lifetime limit and/or coded as incapacitated or needed in home
- DOT funds - funding available for car repairs, car insurance, etc. to low income citizens, who are not currently receiving Work First Family Assistance
- The Cognitive Connection - Cognitive skills training program designed to accommodate non-motivated participants with negative attitudes
- Hispanic Cultural Center - assists Hispanic families in a variety of informational services
- Legal Aid Services - contract with Social Services to provide information regarding custody issues, etc. to Work First families
- HEART - Family Resource Center based at a local subsidized housing complex offering literacy classes, career development, tutoring, family events, parenting, developmental screening, organized groups for the youth, etc
- Domestic Violence Services - contract with Family Care Center to provide services for families dealing with domestic violence
- Teen-Up and Upward Connection - programs designed to reduce teen pregnancy;
- Child Care for illegal aliens - Smart Start funds have been made available to provide child care assistance to U.S. citizen children of illegal aliens
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - program provided by the Parenting Network to assist families who are raising relative children with information and

resources regarding parenting

- Parenting Programs - nurturing classes are provided for parents who desire to improve their parenting skills or because they have been court-ordered to do so;
- DHR Teams - teams consisting of a variety of community professionals to improve school

**Supportive Services:** Daycare, transportation, participation expenses (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, uniforms, tuition and books, etc), food stamps, and child support.

**4) Benefit Diversion:** The culture of Catawba County Social Services has changed. The focus is on employment, not processing entitlements. For many citizens in a short-term crisis, Benefit Diversion is an obvious solution. The change in philosophy and culture must be made at the point of entry for the citizen, and that is being accomplished in Catawba County.

**Activities:** The Case Manager will assess each applicant's situation to determine if Benefit Diversion is appropriate and if so, will offer it to them. The Case Manager will consider previous welfare and employment histories. The applicant's ability to find employment within a brief period of time, maintain current employment, or obtain sufficient income from other sources will also be considered.

**Supportive Services:** Daycare, transportation, participation expenses (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, uniforms, tuition and books, etc), child support, and food stamps.

**5) Staying Off Welfare:** Catawba County is using a multi-faceted approach to keep citizens on the job and off of welfare.

**Activities:** Case Manager will provide case management, counseling and problem solving. Case Manager will evaluate former Work First participants for 200% of poverty services program, Department of Transportation funds, Emergency Assistance, Retention Services and Economic Crisis Services (CIP, GA, FEMA). Referrals to appropriate community resources will be made.

**Supportive Services:** Daycare, transportation, participation expenses (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, uniforms, tuition and books, etc), Extended and Transitional Medicaid Benefits, retention bonus, child support, and Food Stamp assistance.

**6) Job Retention:** Families who leave Work First for employment and continue to be employed six to twelve months after leaving the program show evidence of keeping their income and increases job stability, which impacts a family's well being.

**Activities:** Case Manager will provide case management, counseling and problem solving. Case manager will refer former participants to appropriate agencies, such as Employment Security Commission, JobLink Career Center, and temporary agencies. Case Manager will evaluate former Work First recipients for 200% of poverty services

program, Department of Transportation funds, Emergency Assistance, and Retention Services. Referrals to appropriate community resources will be made.

**Supportive Services:** Daycare, transportation and participation expenses under retention services for first 4 months after leaving Work First (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, uniforms, tuition and books, etc), Transitional Medicaid Benefits, retention bonus, child support, and food stamps.

## B. Local Work First Goals Established by Catawba County

**1) Customer Service:** Catawba County prides itself on providing excellent customer service to all citizens who request services. Catawba County will achieve a 98% positive response from a random Customer Service Survey administered throughout the year.

### **Activities:**

- All applicants and recipients will be informed of all rights and responsibilities
- All applicants and recipients will be informed of all aspects of the program
- All applicants and recipients will be escorted to and from the lobby
- All phones will be answered quickly and all voice mail messages will be returned within ½ of a day
- Staff will ‘treat’ the applicants and recipients as they would a family member
- Applicants or recipients will be seen by a worker within 15 minutes of their arrival at Social Services

### **Supportive Services:**

- Each area in the social services building is color coded to ensure customers can find their way around easily
- Each area in the building has it’s own reception/lobby area
- A phone is available for public use in the main lobby
- Bi-lingual staff (one Spanish and one Hmong). A contract with Fluent Language Solutions to meet other language needs.

**2) Shared Cases:** 100% of shared cases (Work First cases that are also involved with Child Welfare) known to both staff will have mutually developed plans. This is true for both the traditional Work First cases, as well as the Caretaker cases. This assures that families have coordinated plans, not competing requests from the two programs. The staff and programs will support the family in their effort to become self-sufficient and to meet the needs of the children.

### **Activities:**

- Child Welfare Investigator or Assessor will check MCI (Master Client Index) to see if family is open for Work First services. If so, Child Welfare will inform the Work First case manager of their involvement with the family.
- Child Welfare will staff with the Work First case manager to coordinate service needs in particular to issues of substance abuse and domestic violence.
- Child Welfare will assure that the Work First case manager is invited to any Family Group Conferences scheduled.

- Work First case manager will assure that Child Welfare is invited to any success team meetings.
- Child Welfare will inform Work First case manager when services are to terminate, or case plan is to change to foster care/custody of children.

**Supportive Services:**

- New Work First staff will attend the state Cornerstone IIIB training.

**3) Family Well-Being:** 100% of the Work First cases will be assessed regarding child well-being.

**Activities:**

- Holistic family assessment completed.
- Applicant must be assessed for Economic Literacy within 12-calendar days of applying for WFFA by Work First staff. The Economic Literacy assessment is an integral part of the application process.
- All Work First applicants and recipients referred to Vocational Rehabilitation must complete the application and comply with all recommendations. Failure or refusal to comply without good cause will result in the case being denied or terminated.
- Applicant must cooperate with child support within 12-calendar days of applying for WFFA. If the applicant fails or refuses to do so without good cause, deny the application for WFFA and evaluate for Medicaid.
- Caretakers in the child only cases will be required to comply with the policy outlined in Section 104B of the Work First manual – Substance Abuse/Mental Health Initiative as a condition of eligibility. This is in effort to ensure child well being.
- School attendance and progress will be monitored.
- Regular medical check ups and immunizations will be monitored.
- Referrals made to all identified needed resources.

## IV. Administration

### A. Authority for administration of the Work First Plan

The Catawba County Board of County Commissioners retains full authority for the Work First Program.

### B. Organizational Structure

Catawba County Social Services is responsible for administration of the Work First Program. The Work First Program is currently under the supervision of a Program Manager and one Lead Worker who are responsible for assuring that the seven Work First Case Managers carry out the mandates of this program. From the moment the citizen makes first contact with the Agency, he/she is informed that the Work First Program is a temporary assistance program and the goal for each citizen is full time employment and self-sufficiency. The workers in this unit are blended doing both eligibility and employment functions. Each month, the Work First case manager is responsible for approximately 49 families (40 on-going cases and 9 additional cases which includes: benefit diversion / 200% / retention cases.) The Case Manager also serves on Intake twice a week.

Catawba County's JobLink Career Center is located on the campus of Catawba Valley Community College. This is another viable resource to aid citizens in their search for training and employment.

Emergency Assistance is offered to customers per policy. Customers are assessed and if appropriate and available TANF emergency assistance funds are used.

### C. First Stop

The North Carolina General Assembly enacted the First Stop Employment Assistance Program. It is administered by the Employment Security Commission (ESC) and is established to assist applicants and participants of Work First Family Assistance to become employed.

### D. Child Care

Catawba County Social Services has a formal policy, which prioritizes children to be served by the Child Day Care Program. The Social Services Board approved this policy on May 23, 2006.

Families in the following categories will be exempt from the waiting list:

- Priority #1 – Child Protective Services
- Priority #2 – Teen Parents enrolled full time in regular high school
- Priority #3 – Foster Parents
  - Full or part time employed
  - Full or part time post-secondary education
- Priority #4 – Work First parents who are participating in mandatory activities (including Post Secondary Education) to fulfill their Work First Employment and Training requirements and are in full compliance with their Mutual Responsibility Agreement.

Families will be served in the following order:

- Full time employment or full time training leading to employment
- Education
  - Full time post secondary
  - Full time vocational, skills training, GED, ABE, ESL
- Child Welfare Services
- Part time employment
- Part time education
- Development needs

Quick Care, which began in January 1998, assists Work First families with an immediate need for childcare. The Work First families are seen immediately upon becoming employed and are given a voucher based on their declaration of income if verification cannot be obtained before the family is scheduled to begin work. The family is given ten days to provide verification of income. This enables the Work First family to secure childcare immediately, which allows the family to accept the employment offer.

### **E. Transportation**

With approximately 40% of Catawba County's Work First families not owning a car, transportation becomes a critical barrier to employment. Approximately \$25,000 from the Work First Block Grant will be allocated for transportation services for state fiscal year 2009-10. Strategies include the utilization of:

- Public Transportation – Piedmont Wagon
- Taxi Transportation – this service is funded through the Work First Demonstration Grant
- Assessing recipients' vehicles – there are several auto mechanics in the area that are willing to assess the worth of the recipient's car to determine if it is logical for Work First to assist with the cost of car repairs.
- Car donations: the Work and Ride Program accepts vehicles in road-worthy condition and matches them with families in Catawba County who need transportation to maintain employment. Work and Ride is a partnership of Catawba County Social Services and Cooperative Christian Ministry, since the inception of the Work and Ride program, in May 1999, 117 vehicles have been awarded to families struggling for economic independence.
- Transportation for former Work First recipients – a maximum of four months transportation assistance is provided for all Work First customers for any required employment related activities. When a Work First customer goes off of assistance and is working, transportation assistance will continue until they have reached their four-month maximum, as long as their income is below the 200% of poverty level. Department of Transportation funds are utilized for these expenses. During this time, case managers are counseling and assisting the customer with problem solving techniques regarding barriers and issues that might arise.

### **F. Substance Abuse**

It can be anticipated that many of the Work First citizens with substance abuse and mental health problems will have difficulty meeting the conditions established in their Mutual Responsibility Agreement (training, education, employment).

Work First and Family Net have committed to work together in order to craft a plan that addresses local community needs. As a part of the Work First – Substance Abuse Initiative, Family Net provides one (1) FTE Qualified Professional Substance Abuse (QPSA) (stationed on site at Social Services) to conduct initial substance abuse screenings and assessments for the Work First population. The QPSA screens and makes appropriate referrals of other mental health issues. Substance abuse services provided by this program include, but are not limited to the following: Screenings, Assessments, Treatment Planning, Referral to Treatment Services, and Case Management services.

Substance Abuse Screenings: All persons applying for the Work First program will be given an initial substance abuse screening by the QPSA. If the results of this screening detect a possible substance abuse problem, the QPSA will conduct a complete assessment. The assessment interview will take place as soon as possible.

Substance Abuse Assessments: During this scheduled appointment time, the QPSA will conduct a substance abuse assessment, which will include an in-depth clinical interview and the use of a statewide-approved assessment tool, the SUDDS IV.

Treatment Planning and Referral to Treatment Services: When the QPSA identifies a Work First citizen as having a substance abuse problem; the QPSA begins the treatment planning process with the identified person. The QPSA and customer develop a Mutual Responsibility Agreement addressing these issues and appropriate referrals are made for treatment.

Community Support Services: The QPSA stationed at Social Services provides ongoing care coordination, including tracking of progress.

Recipients who fail to participate in recommended substance abuse treatment services will be sanctioned.

### **G. Family Violence Option**

Violence in the family may be a substantial barrier to self-sufficiency for many families. Catawba County, recognizing the impact that violence can have on families, has entered into a contract with Family Guidance to provide an in-depth assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the citizen's situations and to determine services needed, as well as the extent to which the violence is an impediment to self-sufficiency. Family Guidance will provide the following services:

- Individualized assessments for each citizen referred by the Work First case manager. Based on the assessment, the citizen may receive ongoing counseling, psychological testing, and/or supportive services.
- Case consultation with the Work First case manager.

Catawba County Social Services – Work First and Family Guidance agree to closely coordinate activities in order to assure a coordinated plan and no duplication of services.

If a participant is unable to participate in work activities or comply with other Work First requirements at the time of assessment, the participant may request a waiver. The Work First

case manager will use the assessment report from Family Guidance in conjunction with other information concerning the case, to determine if a waiver should be granted and for how long. A waiver may not be appropriate if the participant is able to meet the Work First requirements without endangering the individual or the children.

#### **H. Maintenance of Effort**

The following activities, staff, and services will be funded using Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds:

- Work First Staff
- TANF Fraud Investigative Staff
- Work First Participant Expenses
- Work First Child/Adult Care
- Work First Transportation Expenses
- Retention Services
- Enrichment Services
- Group Support
- Contract – Legal Aid
- Work First Cash – Emergency Assistance
- Others as needed

#### **I. Child Welfare Services**

Forty-seven percent (47%) of the Work First Block Grant will be devoted to Child Welfare Services for fiscal year 2009-10 and fiscal year 2010-11.

## VI. Emergency Assistance

Catawba County will continue to address the emergency needs of families with a combination of resources. Three non-profit assistance Agencies have a long history of serving the needs of families in crisis: the Salvation Army, the Cooperative Christian Ministry (Hickory Area) and the Eastern Cooperative Christian Ministry (serving the Eastern end of the county). A number of smaller programs and Agencies also serve families in need: including, the Red Cross, the Christian Community Outreach Ministries and Family Care Center. Many area churches maintain crisis funds for families in need, in addition to supporting the efforts of the above-referenced Faith-based ministries.

Catawba County Social Services will continue to appropriate a portion of its TANF allocation to the Emergency Assistance Program.

### **To be eligible for Emergency Assistance, the family must:**

- 1) Have a child that meets the Work First Family Assistance guidelines in the home who is related to the specified relative  
**or** be preparing for the return of a child (i.e. child being returned to home from foster care) within the next 60 days  
**or** be the legal custodian or guardian for a minor child in their care.
- 2) Be a US citizen or an eligible alien.
- 3) Be in an emergency situation caused by *circumstances beyond the control of the family* (loss or significant decrease in income, fire, unusual medical expenses that have left the family unable to meet their normal living expenses, etc.)
- 4) Have total countable reserve equal to or below \$3000. Liquid assets are limited to \$300. Vehicles are not counted in reserve. Liquid assets are cash on hand, current savings account balance, checking account balance (except what is needed to pay bills), stocks, bonds, mutual fund shares, savings certificates and revocable trust funds.
- 5) Have a monthly total countable income equal to or below 200% of the federal poverty level. All income, other than the WFFA check will be counted. Use a base period of the month prior to the month of application. Convert income to a monthly amount (by using conversion factors of 4.3, 2.15). Add together the countable earned and unearned income. Compare to the income chart to determine if income eligible.
- 6) Cannot have received EA within the past twelve months.
- 7) Must apply for EA in the county in which they live.
- 8) Is eligible for a 30-day period, once approved. Payments may not exceed \$300 in a 30-day period. Benefits may not be provided under EA more than one time in a twelve-month period.

The definition for specified relative is taken from the Kinship rule as written in the Work First Manual. A specified relative is:

- A parent. This includes the natural mother or father, a legal father, or adoptive parents(s) after issuance of the final order. Note: A parent's blood relationship remains intact even after a child's adoption to another family. Therefore, the natural parent or other natural

relative listed below may meet the kinship rule even after the child has been adopted into another family.

- An alleged father or other alleged paternal relative
- A blood or half blood relative or adoptive relative limited to: brother, sister, grandparent, great-grandparent, uncle or aunt, great-uncle or aunt, great-great uncle or aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin or first cousin once removed.
- A step-relative is limited to: stepparent, stepbrother, and stepsister.
- Spouses of anyone in the above groups, even after the marriage has been terminated by death or divorce.

**The Agency must:**

- 1) Make a decision to approve or deny the EA application within five workdays from the date of application.

**Evaluation of Emergencies**

- 1) EA cannot be used to improve the family's standard of living.
- 2) Explore whether any member of the family will have income that can be used to meet the emergency. (Will they get paid again before the power bill is due?)
- 3) Explore with them the steps they have taken to alleviate the emergency.
- 4) Evaluate whether or not the family has experienced a sudden change that has led to a decrease in income or created an extra expense
- 5) Evaluate to determine if they caused their own emergency. Do they have a history of being in a crisis situation? If so, explore other options.
- 6) Determine if EA will prevent recurrence of the emergency. Will they be able to maintain on an ongoing basis if we alleviate this emergency or will they have the same problem next month?
- 7) If the family has been penalized for failure to comply with WFFA program requirements, and the emergency could have been prevented had they complied, deny the EA application.
- 8) Heating and cooling crisis: CIP monies must be used first. If there are no CIP monies, EA monies can be used to alleviate the crisis.
- 9) TANF funded assistance may not be provided for any medical care, regardless of whether the family members are covered by Medicaid. If assistance is provided for medical care it must be with MOE (Maintenance of Effort) funds and only for services that are not covered by Medicaid.
- 10) As a general rule, EA will not be used to assist customers who live in Public Housing (their rent is already being subsidized by government assistance.) However, if there are special circumstances beyond the control of the family, which have consumed the family's income, the worker may use prudent judgment. (Ex. All of the available income was used to get the family's car repaired and the car is essential to their continued employment.) These situations should be rare and the worker may wish to staff the case with others.

## **VII. Services to Low Income Families (under 200% of Poverty)**

Catawba County will provide services to families with income at or below 200% of poverty when: the family is a former Work First family, the adult is working, and the services provided will assist the adult in maintaining employment which will keep the family from reentering the traditional Work First Program.

The following services may be provided:

- Short term housing;
- Child and Family Enrichment Activities;
- Transportation;
- Child Care;
- Parenting training/services;
- Work-related expenses; and
- Case management.
- Other appropriate services that can be funded by TANF and MOE that would prevent the family from losing employment and returning to Work First.

Eligibility for services will be determined per state policy:

- Family's total gross monthly income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (accept family's statement, unless it is questionable);
- Same definition of a family as used for current Work First participants;
- At least one child in the family must be under 18 and meet the same kinship and living with rules as current Work First families; and
- Complete and maintain the eligibility worksheet.

If appropriate, and if funds are available through the Work First/Employment Transportation Operating Assistance Program (DOT) the "families with children at or below 200% of poverty" will be referred for transportation assistance through the DOT funds.

All Work First citizens who are subject to the work requirements will be served before offering or providing the above listed services to "families with children at or below the 200% federal poverty level." Catawba County will ensure that all Work First citizens are served first through the organization of the Work First unit. In Catawba County, it is the responsibility of the Work First Case Manager to implement the entire Work First Program -- cash assistance and employment. Therefore, from the moment the applicant presents her/himself for Work First, the focus is on helping the family meet their financial needs through employment and child support. On the day of application, the case manager begins to lay the foundation and ground rules for the program. The Mutual Responsibility Agreement is jointly developed and services are provided which will enhance the likelihood that the adult becomes employed and self-sufficient.

### **VIII. Services to Non-Custodial Parents**

Catawba County will not offer services to non-custodial parents.

## **IX. Exemption from the Work Requirement**

As funds and resources allow, Catawba County will begin to expand the Work Registration requirement to families with children under the age of one. In the general work force, the federal Family Medical Leave Act dictates individuals are to be allowed up to twelve weeks of paid/unpaid leave following the birth of a child. As funds and resources allow, Catawba County will expand its employment program to families with children under the age of one, to mirror this requirement of the Family Medical Leave Act.

## **X. Innovative County Strategies**

Catawba County has historically demonstrated creative and highly effective collaborative efforts combining the skills and resources of multiple agencies and programs. The same is true of this effort. Several successful initiatives are currently in place to protect children and strengthen families. These projects include:

Legal Services for Child-Only Cases: Catawba County has a contract with Legal Aid of North Carolina to provide legal services to “child only” Work First Family Assistance citizens and, if applicable and appropriate, to “regular” Work First Family Assistance citizens to increase the family stability for the children. The legal services provided include:

- Counsel and Advice;
- Preparation of documents such as education affidavits, health care consent forms;
- Representation in custody, guardianship, and adoption proceedings

Economic Literacy: Work First has partnered with Community College to provide Economic Literacy classes to Work First participants as part of the Human Resource Development (Employability Skills Class) at Catawba Valley Community College. Topics covered are:

- Identify values
- Identify money goals
- Develop a plan to achieve goals – making ends meet
- Earned Income Credit

Work First Participants are also given a “Making Ends Meet: How to Budge When You Don’t Have Enough Money!” by Steven Schoeneck, CPA.

Tax Preparation: Catawba County Social Services staff heard stories for years about struggling families losing hundreds of dollars at tax time either through tax preparation costs or interest lost to take advantage of programs that provide a quick tax refund. With the encouragement and support of the Internal Revenue Service, staff established Volunteers in Tax Assistance site to assist with tax preparation. Social Services staff headed up the effort. Staff from Catawba Valley Community College and Lenoir-Rhyne College were invited to join. The group decided to serve families with less than \$35,000 in income. It was agreed that the Tax Link would operate at the Job Link Career Center on the East Campus of CVCC. Tax Link just completed its fourth year of operation. For Tax Year 2007, the 25 volunteers assisted 278 families in filing their tax forms with refunds of over \$380,000. In addition, members of Tax Link along with NCSSA members operated a Walk-In Tax Clinic for Social Security recipients for three days in mid-April. The purpose of the Walk-In Tax Clinic was to assist those who receive Social Security benefits in filing for the Economic Tax Stimulus check. 198 citizens were assisted during the three days of this project.

Faith Community: The Faith Community Task Force on Poverty in Catawba County was formed in 1996 and even though it no longer exists, one of the most successful outcomes of this task force is the Work and Ride Program. The Work and Ride Program is a partnership of Catawba County Social Services and Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry. The

Work and Ride Program accepts vehicles that are road-worthy and matches them with families in Catawba County who need transportation to maintain employment.

JobLink Career Center: Catawba County's JobLink Career Center is located at Catawba Valley Community College East Campus. The center's partners include:

- Catawba County Social Services – Work First
- New Choices
- Catawba Valley Community College
- Employment Security Commission
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Workforce Investment Act
- Goodwill Industries – Career Connections
- Cognitive Connection
- Senior Community Service Employment Program

The services offered at the center include:

- Career Counseling
- Career Testing/Assessment
- Computer Software Tutorials
- Job Referral and Listings
- Labor Market Information
- Referrals for supportive Services
- Resume Preparation
- Career Readiness Certificate – KeyTrain

Retention Services: Catawba County provides a one-time lump sum Employment Retention Bonus of \$400 to Work First participants whose Work First check terminates due to earned income and who remain employed:

- With the same employer (unless the change is an improvement), and
- Full time (30+ hours per week) for four consecutive months following termination of their Work First cash benefit.
- Income eligible based on the 200% level of poverty

This typically follows the State's Job Bonus, which is an exclusion of 100% of the earned income for three months. The Employment Retention Bonus is given at the end of the fourth month of not receiving the cash payment of Work First. Therefore, typically the Retention Bonus is given after the adult has been employed for seven months. During the four months following termination of the participant's Work First check, the Work First case manager continues to provide follow-up counseling and appropriate supportive services. The goal is to provide successfully employed Work First families with an incentive and reward for changing their employment behavior.

## **XI. Special Issues**

Over the past decade, Catawba County has experienced a changing population and economy. The Asian population grew steadily in the early years of the millennium, but has since declined. Currently, 4460 Asian persons call Catawba County home--an increase of only 1.3% since July 2000. Many have found success in this area. However, others still struggle with the language and cultural differences.

The Latino population has grown by 61% in Catawba County since 2000 and is now 12,917 persons. Many Latino immigrants are not in the country legally. Of growing concern is the increasing number of children in the 'Child Only' caseload where the child is a US citizen, but the adults in the home are ineligible alien. Currently, there are 11 cases or 6% of the 'Child Only' cases where the US born child of an ineligible alien is receiving benefits. Because of the restrictions of the TANF program, these individuals are not subject to the work requirements or subject to the time limits. Staff continues to look for ways to strengthen these families.

The Asian and Latino immigrants bring a unique mix of languages and cultures to the area. The Work First unit currently has two bi-lingual staff (one Spanish and one Hmong). With the increasing diversity, new issues and concerns are identified. Language and cultural differences can be employment barriers.

Other language needs can be met by the Agency's contract with Fluent Language Solutions.

## **XII. Eligibility**

Catawba County will follow criteria established and implemented by the State regarding for the following:

- Age limits for children
- Payment levels
- Benefit Calculation
- Countable income
- Resources requirement (limit and countable items)
- Time limits and Extensions

Catawba County will maintain the linkage between Work First and Medicaid in which Work First eligibility will cause automatic Medicaid eligibility for everyone included in the Work First Assistance payment.

Catawba County proposes changes to the following policies. These changes will be implemented once the State and Catawba County's plan has been approved. All Catawba County policies will be supported by 'prudent person' concept. A prudent person is an individual who uses good judgment or common sense and follows the community ethics, and always exercises due care. The line staff are expected to follow policy, but are empowered to make decisions in the best interest of the citizen.

Any time accrued by a recipient on the State Two Year clock will be carried forward.

### **Electing County Policy**

#### **1. Definition of Relationship:**

Catawba County will follow criteria established and implemented by the State regarding definition of relationship and who may apply for assistance with one exception. The exception is as follows:

When siblings (half brothers/half sisters) have been placed with one of the siblings relative by *child welfare/social services* (must have been placed by Social Services) and the relative meets the state's definition of 'kinship' for one of the children. Then the adult can apply for the entire sibling group.

For example: Child welfare places half brothers with one of the boy's uncle (the uncle is not related to one of the boys and does not have legal custody or guardianship) – this exception would allow the uncle to apply for both of the children.

#### **2. Who Can Apply / Be included in payment:**

Catawba County will follow criteria established and implemented by the State regarding who may apply and be included in payment for assistance with one exception. The exception is as follows:

To receive Work First Family Assistance one must have an eligible child in the home who is included in the assistance unit. A child receiving SSI or Adoption Assistance is not considered an eligible child since their financial needs are already being met and they are not included in the assistance unit.

### **3. Benefit Diversion Requirements:**

Catawba County will follow criteria established and implemented by the State regarding benefit diversion with the following exceptions:

Applicant must cooperate with Child Support and the applicant must register with First Stop if not already employed or job being held for the applicant and if monetarily eligible for Unemployment Benefits (UIB) must apply for the UIB prior to approval of the Benefit Diversion application.

### **4. Sanctions:**

Catawba County will utilize the full family sanction, which is

*Parents or caretakers who, without good cause, do not comply/cooperate will make the entire family ineligible for a Work First Family payment for one month or until compliance, whichever is later. When a family in a sanction fails to comply/cooperate and does not receive a payment for three consecutive months, the Work First Family Assistance case will be terminated and evaluated for Medicaid*

for all four categories of non-compliance. The four categories of non-compliance are:

- Failure to cooperate with Child Support Enforcement (in addition the adult will lose their Medicaid eligibility unless pregnant with the full family sanction)
- Non-compliance with the provisions of the MRA
- Failure to participate in required substance abuse treatment
- Intentional Program Violation

When a family moves to Catawba County and is in a sanction in the county they are leaving – the Sanction will be a full family sanction in our county for the appropriate time frame unless the family can “fix” the reason the family was sanctioned – i.e. not obtaining children’s well check up and prior to moving to Catawba County they obtained the well check up.

### **5. Cooperation with Child Support is an eligibility requirement:**

Applicant must cooperate with child support within 12-calendar days of applying for WFFA. If the applicant fails or refuses to do so without good cause, deny the application for WFFA and evaluate for Medicaid.

### **6. Economic Literacy assessment is an eligibility requirement:**

Applicant must be assessed for Economic Literacy within 12-calendar days of applying for WFFA by Work First staff. The Economic Literacy assessment is an integral part of the application process. If the applicant fails or refuses to be assessed, deny the application for WFFA and evaluate for Medicaid.

### **7. Vocational Rehabilitation:**

All Work First applicants and recipients referred to Vocational Rehabilitation must complete the application and comply with all recommendations. Failure or refusal to comply without good cause will result in the case being denied or terminated. Future eligibility is contingent upon completing application and cooperating with Vocational Rehabilitation.

**8. Functional Assessments:**

The functional capacity evaluation (FCE) assesses a person's ability to perform work from a physical, medical, behavioral or mental perspective. One result from the FCE is a finding that the participant has no capacity for work, and this finding assists the participant in Social Security Disability benefits process. An alternative finding is that the participant has full or limited work capacity. In that case, the Work First case manager and the participant will update the MRA to incorporate work activities based on the FCE results. As long as the state pays for Functional Assessments, Catawba County will utilize this service through a contract.

**9. SUCCESS for Families Team:**

Failure to attend the Success for Families Team meeting, if required, without good cause will result in termination of WFFA and at least one month of ineligibility. Future eligibility is contingent upon attendance at the Success for Families Team meeting.

**10. Substance Abuse/Mental Health Initiative for all cases:**

Caretakers in the child only cases will be required to comply with the policy outlined in Section 104B of the Work First manual – Substance Abuse/Mental Health Initiative as a condition of eligibility. This is in effort to ensure child well-being.

**11. Reviews:**

All reviews will be completed every 6 months.

**12. Job Quit:**

Job quit sanction (same as non-compliance) will be applied to those individuals who voluntarily quit a job, refuse to accept a bona fide job offer, request a reduction in hours, all without good cause or are terminated with cause.

**XIII. Community Service Programs**

Catawba County chooses not to require parents or caretakers receiving assistance to participate in community services employment, but will utilize other state and federal acceptable activities in assisting the participant in becoming employed.

#### **XIV. Appeals Process**

Catawba County will have a two-tier appeals process that substantially complies with state law (G.S. 108A-79).

A line supervisor in the Family Support Division who has not had any involvement with the family or the case will conduct the first tier of the hearing process. Unless the family requests an extension with good cause, this hearing must be held within five workdays of the request. A written statement of the decision must be served by certified mail to the appellant within five working days of the first tier hearing. The first-tier hearing follows all of the time frames and conditions of state/standard county policy.

If the family wishes to appeal the decision rendered by the first tier appeal, the family must notify Catawba County Social Services within 15 days of the date the initial decision was mailed to the appellant. If the appellant withdraws their request for the second-tier appeal prior to the hearing date the decision of the first-tier hearing stands. The second tier hearing will take place within ten workdays and will be recorded. A supervisor who has not had any involvement with the family or the case will conduct the second-tier hearing. The hearing officer will render his/her decision within 45 days.

Catawba County policy will differ from G.S. 108A-79 in that the Hearing Officer who conducts the second tier hearing has only 45 days to render a decision and that decision will be considered final.

Any applicant/recipient who is dissatisfied with the final decision of the Department may file, within 30 days of receipt of notice of such decision, a petition for judicial review in Superior Court of Catawba County. Failure to file a petition within the time stated shall operate as a waiver of the right of such party to review.

## **XV. Review Prior to Expiration of Time Limits**

Catawba County will continue to follow criteria established and implemented by the State for reviewing cases prior to the expiration of time limits. In addition to this program manager and supervisor will review and monitor weekly/monthly state reports regarding families time limits. Program manager and supervisor will continue to complete monthly staffings with the Work First case managers to review the time used by each participant and to discuss actions that are needed to be taken to empower the family to move towards self-sufficiency.

Each time a Mutual Responsibility Agreement is developed, the Eligibility Tracking Update screen is reviewed, discussed, and signed by the case manager and participant to ensure that both parties are aware of the months left on the time clocks.

Catawba County's Success for Families at Risk plan is designed to formalize the strategies that are already in place and to strengthen existing collaborative efforts. The purpose of the initiative is to give priority to serving all Work First families who have received cash assistance for 30 or more months and Work First citizen who are incapacitated. These participants may also have other barrier to success such as physical disabilities, substance abuse, mental health issues, low IQ, low basic education skills and little or no work history.

Currently, Catawba County has 16 Work First families that have more than 30 months on their 60 month clock and all 16 families are receiving intensive employment services. The current Team Members of the Success Initiative include:

- Employment Security Commission Job Placement Counselor
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- Qualified Substance Abuse Professional
- Work First Case Manager
- Work First Supervisor
- Work First Family
- Child Welfare Staff (if appropriate)

The Success Team meets as needed to review progress and to revise plans, if necessary. The Success Team develops a plan that draws upon the resources identified and maximizes the potential of the family achieving self-sufficiency.

## XVI. Funding Requirements

### Electing County Funding Requirements

The following activities, staff, and services will be funded using Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds:

- Work First Staff
- TANF Fraud Investigative Staff
- Work First Participant Expenses
- Work First Child/Adult Care
- Work First Transportation Expenses
- Work First Education/Training
- Retention Services
- Enrichment Services
- Group Support
- Contract – Legal Aid
- Work First Cash – Emergency Assistance
- Others as needed

Amount of Work First Block Grant earmarked for Child Welfare Services is 46% in both fiscal years (FY 2009-10 and FY 2010-11).

Amount of the county block grant designated for Work First Diversion Assistance, Work First Family Assistance, Work First Services and the Maintenance of Effort contribution:

	<u>FY 2009-10</u>	<u>FY 2010-11</u>
Child Welfare Services	\$1,172,640	\$1,172,640*
TANF CPS/FS Adoption	<u>\$ 191,872</u>	<u>\$ 191,872</u>
TOTAL WFBG for Children	\$1,364,512	\$1,364,512
TANF Domestic Violence	\$ 27,900	\$ 27,900
Day Care Administration	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
WF Purchased Services	\$ 557,100	\$ 557,100
WF Family Assistance	\$ 664,118	\$ 664,118*
WF Benefit Diversion	<u>\$ 284,622</u>	<u>\$ 284,662*</u>
TOTAL WFBG for Families	\$1,593,740	\$1,593,740
<b>Grand Total – WFBG</b>	<b>\$2,958,252</b>	<b>\$2,958,252</b>
Maintenance of Effort	\$1,584,850	\$1,584,850

\* *Catawba County anticipates utilizing \$145,000 from TANF Cash for Child Welfare Services.*

**XVII. Certification**

As Chairman of the Catawba County Board of Commissioners, I hereby certify that during each fiscal year to which this plan is applicable:

This program will be known as the Catawba County Work First Program;

The provision described in this plan will be carried out in accordance with state and federal law;

This plan was developed based upon recommendations of the Planning Committee, current Work First participants, Social Services/Work First staff, and citizens of Catawba County.

I also certify that:

The citizens of Catawba County have been given an opportunity to review this plan.

The Catawba County Board of County Commissioners has approved this plan and is the entity responsible for the Catawba County Work First Program.

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Katherine W. Barnes, Chair  
Catawba County Board of Commissioners