

Macon County Social Services Board

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Regular Meeting Minutes

Welcome/Call to Order

Patrick Betancourt called the regular meeting of the Macon County Social Services Board to order. Members attending were Anne Hyder, Mike Williams, Patrick Betancourt (Executive Officer and Secretary to the Board), and Amy Sanderfur (Administrative Officer). Dale West was excused in her absence. Guests in attendance were Sheila Conley and Jody Brock.

Proposed Agenda

Agenda was approved on motion of Anne Hyder and second by Mike Williams.

Minutes

August minutes were approved on motion of Anne Hyder and second by Mike Williams.

Energy Update

Sheila Conley, Income Maintenance Supervisor, gave an overview of the Energy Assistance program, including clarification of the two parts of the program, Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) and Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and how the two differ and are determined/distributed.

Important notes:

- 1) We attempt to reserve the funds for Macon County since the winters are much more harsh than the summers.
- 2) The annual maximum per customer for CIP is \$600.00 (set by the state), which is the same amount it has been for 20+ years. Also, the CIP program is designed to alleviate the customer's crisis, so in instances where the balance due to do that is over the \$600 max, we work with community partners (CareNet, Macon New Beginnings, local churches, etc.) to get the crisis abated.
- 3) We currently only have one wood provider due to issues with pricing.
- 4) Enrollment in the state provider portal for direct deposit has caused several providers difficulties, resulting in the county's need to continue to pay via check for a number of these providers.

Sheila shared that the current year's CIP funds have been loaded (\$103,193.00), while the current year's "regular" LIEAP funds have yet to be received.

There has been a direct deposit of automatic LIEAP payments (supplemental payments begun during Covid), totaling \$100,961.00: \$70,903.00 to Duke Energy, \$1725.00 to Haywood, \$1150.00 to Skyview, and the remaining \$27,181.00 to Macon County DSS to distribute to non-enrolled providers.

Medicaid Training Update

Jody Brock, Medicaid Trainer, gave an overview of her new position and how the transition is going. She explained that she is working with the newest Adult Medicaid worker to help her become more acclimated to the job, as well as with a more seasoned employee to help with time management and general job aids. Jody has prepared step-by-step binders, including a daily routine checklist, to assist new hires in particular with the many tasks that are required on a day-to-day basis in the Medicaid program. Jody looks forward to working with new Medicaid Eligibility Specialists as they are hired, both in one-on-one as well as group settings.

State Budget Status

Patrick shared with the Board that just last night the State Legislature agreed to submit a budget to the Governor. If the Governor approves and the budget passes, it is anticipated that Medicaid Expansion will then have a roll-out date of 12/1/2023.

DHHS Takeover of County Child Welfare Systems

Patrick reported the DHHS takeover of Nash County, NC Child Welfare System, after investigations surrounding a couple of high profile child fatalities within that county. An infrequent and unfortunate occurrence, it prompts consideration of our system. The confidence in our team (supervisors and staff) is strong, but these situations ultimately confirm the importance of continual monitoring.


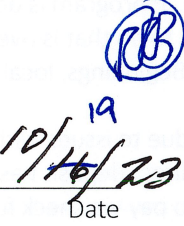
Personnel Updates/Agency Exits

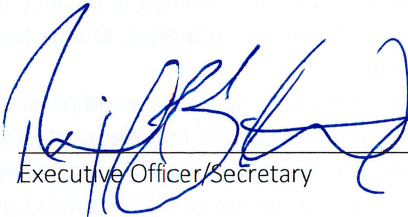
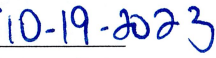
After a slow start, we are receiving more applications for Medicaid workers, with interviews taking place currently. Still five Medicaid Eligibility Specialist (job title revised) positions to be filled. In the continued absence of a replacement for Personnel Tech/HR, County HR has been helpful as we work to fill these positions.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next month's meeting will be Thursday, October 19, at 9:00 a.m.
Kristy Nickoden will attend virtually to provide further, more detailed insight on the subject of County Human Services Consolidation.
Motion to adjourn made by Anne Hyder, second by Mike Williams.

APPROVED BY:

 
Chairman Date

 
Executive Officer/Secretary Date