

Durham County
Work First Plan County Plan Model for 2010-2011 Biennium

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County Work First Plans must include family centered policy language/practices demonstrated in the plan. Each county plan should include a specific and clear discussion on how it will integrate family centered practice in the daily involvement with families including support for child only cases. Family centered approaches empower families making them key participants in developing services and demonstrates the six (6) principles of partnerships which are:

- 1. Everyone desires respect;***
- 2. Everyone needs to be heard;***
- 3. Everyone has strengths;***
- 4. Judgments can wait;***
- 5. Partners share power;***
- 6. Partnership is a process.***

In addition county Work First plans must include in its plan policies and practices on compliance with American with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as the provision of interpreter services for its citizens that require such accommodations. Provide a detailed discussion on how the county complies with ADA the request for interpreter services.

Requests for Interpreter Services:

Durham County Department of Social Services has a “**Language Assistance Policy (LAP)**” to meet the needs of those for whom reading, writing, speaking or understanding English is difficult. This is in adherence to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The need for LEP services is determined at initial contact with each client, either by client’s request or worker’s determination. For those in need of bilingual or interpreter services, an appropriate bilingual staff person will be assigned to the case. If there is no employee available for the client’s primary language, then either an in-house interpreter/translator will be provided or a contracted telephone interpreting service will be used. These services are offered at no cost to the client.

For those with speech, hearing or seeing difficulties, every effort is made to accommodate those needs through the use of a TTY machine as well as interpreters.

Further, the county plans should include the following:

I. Conditions within the County

Briefly describe the current realities for low-income families in your county and key issues addressed by the plan. What are the most pressing problems? In addition to the narrative, provide relevant supporting documentation. Include current and projected economic trends such as new businesses, plant closings, and job availability. In this section, do not include much raw data, instead, include analysis and cite the sources.

The Work First Planning Committee discussed the current realities of low-income families living in Durham County and developed a list of issues and needs. The community defined “low-income families” in accordance with the State’s Need Standard. The issues and needs listed below continue to be major barriers to self-sufficiency in Durham County.

- **Education:** Major issues related to education are the dropout rate, extremely limited alternative education programs to better prepare residents for local employment, and the need for adult educational services in a variety of areas, such as tutoring and courses to obtain a GED or a high school diploma. In addition, sufficient time is needed for Work First participants to complete the necessary training in order to obtain work in Durham’s highly competitive job market that will lead to self-sufficiency. According to the State Department of Public Instruction, the dropout data for school year 2006-2007, which is the most current, were 508 students (4.90%) dropping out for high school students in Durham Public Schools compared to a slightly higher number of 520 students (5.15%) for the previous reporting period of 2005-2006. This compares to a state rate of 5.24% for the 2006-2007 reporting year.

Job Readiness Counseling: The major issue related to job readiness counseling is the need for a comprehensive life skills management program for Work First participants. The Department of Social Services (DSS) has partnered with Durham Technical Community College to create a customized class for Work First participants called “Job Achievers and Development Academy” (JADA). The program includes goal setting, teambuilding, dealing with change, conflict resolution and other topics to prepare participants for the workforce. A life skills management program is needed to teach such skills as personal budgeting, managing and coping with stress, arranging and maintaining transportation and child care, participating in a teamwork environment, and managing conflict. Further helpful skills would emphasize personal development such as confidence building, work ethic, committing to long-term job placement and balancing work and personal life.

- **Job Retention Career Advancement:** As more Work First participants enter the workplace and leave the welfare rolls, their ability to remain in a job is

jeopardized without adequate, on-going training, support and counseling. Further training, including On-the-Job Training, is often necessary for participants to advance in their careers. Many of the jobs available to Work First participants do not pay appropriate salaries to reach self-sufficiency. In some situations, these jobs lack the flexible work hours which would allow participants time to pursue supplemental or higher education opportunities. Further, some Work First participants find it difficult to advance in their jobs. The Workforce Investment Act Program administered by the City of Durham provides training and job coaching to low-income individuals who have enrolled in the program. This program is supported by grant funds whose funding sources and focus may vary from year to year, making it difficult for this program to consistently address long-term needs of retention and advancement services.

- **Health Care:** For low-income families not eligible for Medicaid or Health Choice, major issues arise related to health care. Health care issues include the inability to afford the costs of basic medical care, medications and health insurance. As a result, low-income families often use the hospital's emergency room as their primary source for medical treatment. This problem is especially evident among the County's growing Latino community, in which low-income workers cannot afford or do not have jobs which provide health insurance. It is estimated that 61.5% of Latino adults and 36.9% of Latino children lack health insurance (NC Institute of Medicine).

Durham County DSS has placed staff at medical sites throughout the county to receive and process applications for medical assistance. Several community agencies also have applications for medical assistance which can be completed and mailed back to the agency. The Durham Community Health Network, comprised of Duke University Medical Center, DSS, the Durham County Health Department, Lincoln Community Health Center, and several local private health care providers provides health care management for high-risk Medicaid recipients suffering from chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes and hypertension. The Local Access to Coordinated Health program (LATCH) is a coalition of service providers (Duke University Medical Center, the Durham County Health Department, DSS, Lincoln Community Health Center, El Centro Hispano, Planned Parenthood, Catholic Social Ministries and the Durham City Parks and Recreation Department) which focuses on helping uninsured Latinos and other non-English speaking families access health care. The LATCH program is now a part of Duke's Division of Community Health.

- **Basic Necessities:** Major issues related to basic necessities include the need for safe, decent and affordable housing and the lack of consistent nutritional health. Housing for low-income families remains a problem especially for families in North East Central Durham because some residents still lack decent housing. Food and Nutrition Services eligible families and

children in Durham County, including many Work First participants, are at a greater risk of being overweight and developing diabetes, heart disease and other chronic diseases. Many of these families lack access to adequate healthcare or are underinsured. The nutritional health of these families is further compromised by limited access to “healthy food” choices at reasonable prices in their neighborhoods.

Increasing food and energy costs will continue to take a toll on low-income families, whose paychecks may not rise accordingly. From July 2007 to July 2008, the average cost of food for urban consumers in the Southeast rose 4 percent and medical care costs rose 3.6 percent (U.S. Bureau of Labor). The average price for a gallon of regular gas was just \$2.81 in September 2007, versus \$3.72 for the same week one year later (U.S. Department of Energy).

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s report entitled “Out of Reach,” in 2008 the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Durham County is \$796. Housing is considered affordable if it costs no more than 30% of the renter’s income. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of one’s income on housing, a household must earn \$2,650 monthly or \$31,800 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year at this level of income translates into an hourly wage for rent of \$15.31 per hour.

In Durham County, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$6.55. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment in Durham county, a minimum wage earner must work 100 hours per week, 52 weeks per year or a household must include 2.5 minimum wage earners working 40 hours per week year-round.

In Durham County, the estimated mean (average) wage for a renter is \$18.77 an hour. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment at this wage, a renter must work 33 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

Monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for an individual are \$637 in Durham County. If SSI represents an individual’s sole source of income, the individual can afford only \$191 in monthly rent, while the FMR for a one-bedroom is \$710.

- **Transportation:** The lack of reliable and affordable transportation continues to make it difficult for many low income households to hold and maintain jobs because of the difficulty of getting to and from the workplace. Durham’s public transportation system does not adequately provide service to all areas of the county and its outlying growth areas at any time that it’s needed. Although the city has a plan to address the issue with transportation, it appears it will be sometime before the problem can adequately be addressed. Public transportation service in the evenings and on weekends has increased;

yet service needs remain for some who work evenings, weekends and holidays. Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) which provides service from Durham to the Research Triangle Park and Raleigh has increased its service, but still does not adequately meet the transportation needs of Durham County residents.

- **Child Care:** The availability and accessibility of affordable, quality child care and the need for flexible and extended child care hours remain a major issue. Although Durham has made significant gains in the availability of quality child care to low-income families, insufficient resources at times result in an extensive waiting list which makes quality and affordable child care inaccessible for many low-income families. At the time of this document, Durham County is not maintaining a waiting list. Additionally, with some of Durham's public schools adopting a year-round schedule and different start times, an increased need for child care on school holidays, vacations as well as before and after school has resulted. Child care deficits also exist for families with sick children or those families who work in the evenings or on weekends.
- **Personal and Family Counseling:** Major issues related to the need for personal and family counseling still exist. Limited services are available to low-income families. Durham County is in need of programs which provide marital counseling, parent/child conflict counseling, child and adult abuse/neglect counseling, and financial counseling.
- **Service Access:** Durham County is fortunate to have non-profit human service agencies that offer essential services; yet clients experience difficulty getting to these human service agencies in part due to the agencies' lack of flexible service hours. United Way has an automated service directory which provides information about service providers, their locations and hours, and other pertinent information related to human services. This automated service is accessible 24-hours a day by telephone (United Way 2-1-1) and provides both information and referrals. Even with the United Way service directory, more resources are needed, especially in the area of transportation, to connect families with the appropriate services.
- **Demographics:** Durham County is home to a diverse population. Based on the most recent U.S. Census figures (2007), Durham County's current population is estimated at 256,500. In 2006, the median household income was \$46,636, which was over \$4,000 higher than the State's median household income. Also, according to the 2007 American Community Survey, approximately 16.2% of Durham's population is living below the poverty line. Of those 18 and younger, 19.3% live in poverty. The U.S. Census also reported the racial composition of Durham's community as: 47.5% Caucasian; 37.0% African-American; 4.4% Asian; .02% American Indian or Alaskan native; and .01% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander;

and 1.9% two or more races. 11.6% of Durham's population is Hispanic or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006).

- **Economic Profile:** Durham County has a diverse economic base rooted in high-technology industries, including biopharmaceutical, computer, telecommunications and electronics. This diversified economy attracts and maintains large employers throughout the county, as evidenced by its five largest employers: Duke University and Medical Center, IBM, Durham Public Schools, GlaxoSmithKline, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC. Additionally, Durham County is the home to much of the world-renowned Research Triangle Park (RTP), the largest and most successful planned research and developmental park in the country. The 130+ firms in RTP employ approximately 40,000 workers.

Known as The City of Medicine, Durham is home to a plethora of medical facilities, services, and personnel. Nearly one in three employees in the Durham labor force works in a health or medical related industry. Durham County has one of the nation's top five concentrations of physicians per capita [Durham Chamber of Commerce].

- **Job Availability:** Durham County continues to see a growth in jobs created. In 2007, 4,709 new jobs were created, and in 2006, that figure was 4,846 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). These figures are higher than in years prior to 2006 and the future looks promising with the development of several recent business expansions and announcements this year alone. Again, though, these are primarily skilled jobs.
- **Earnings and Income:** Durham County's median household income for 2006 was \$46,636, while the per capita income for 2006 was \$26,035. These numbers reveal a disparity in earnings across the County's population. The number of families who live below poverty level is disturbing. The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2006) reveals that 30.8% of "families with a female householder (no husband present)" had an income in the past 12 months below the poverty level.
- **Employment:** The unemployment rate in Durham County increased to 5.5% in July 2008 after decreasing yearly since 2002. As a comparison, the July 2007 unemployment rate was 4.2%. However, Durham has a lower unemployment rate than the state which was 6.6% in July 2008 (NC Employment Security Commission). While job growth continues to remain steady, there is a concern that new jobs created in Durham County are not going to Durham County residents.
- **Business Closings:** According to the most recent compilation of closings and layoffs by the state Employment and Security Commission, Durham County experienced 23 closings and 7 layoffs in 2007, affecting 538 people. For 2008 (January – August), there were 27 reported closing and 13 layoffs

which affected 551 people. These numbers reveal that Durham County is still in the midst of a downward economy along with much of the nation.

- **Economic Development:** In Durham County, for the period of January 2008 through September 2008, the total announced investment for new and expanding industry is \$729,112,840 [Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce]. The capital investment for Durham County has a mix of expanding and new ventures and businesses, indicating a high degree of confidence in the area's labor force, the economy for businesses to continue reinvesting in the community, and Durham's ability to attract new companies to relocate here. The table below displays development activity for 2008.

Company	New/Exp.	Square Ft.	Investment	Jobs
BD Bioscience	Exp	0	\$21,000,000	100
BD Technologies	Exp	0	\$1,500,000	35
BD Diagnostics	Exp	0	\$4,500,000	47
Cheminova	New	9,216	\$146,080	20
Patheon	New	12,500	\$437,500	50
Implus	New	262,000	\$22,585,000	105
IBM	Exp	100,000	\$362,000,000	10
Merck	Exp	250,000	\$300,000,000	150
Horner International	New	43,000	\$2,000,000	10
Professional Mail Services	Exp	63,000	\$315,000	60
Duke University CRO	Exp	72,000	\$2,160,000	300
Brickman	Exp	14,900	\$40,000	20
ICON	Exp	19,670	\$1,323,500	85
North Carolina Biotech Center	Exp	25,000	\$3,870,000	30
UNC Dental School	New	69,000	\$2,000,000	250
Argolyn Bioscience	New	2,000	\$20,000	5
Syngenta	Exp	19,776	\$671,640	75
BlueCross Blue Shield	Exp	34,000	\$680,000	0
Creative Recycling	Exp	49,600	\$125,000	5
Induspac	Exp	11,640	\$0	0
Almac	Exp	23,000	\$3,235,000	90
Cree	Exp	16,412	\$304,120	35
PBM	Exp	105,000	\$100,000	5
Tire Center	Exp	30,000	\$100,000	5
Totals		1,231,714	\$729,112,840	1492

(Source: Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce 2008)

- **Self-Sufficiency:** It is important to also consider how much money it takes for a family of a given size and composition to be self-sufficient, i.e. to pay for their basic necessities without public assistance payments such as Work First, Food and Nutrition Services, medical care and/or child support. Self-sufficiency also means maintaining a decent standard of living and not having to choose between basic necessities. Due to the relatively high cost of living in Durham County, many low-income individuals face difficult decisions such as to how to prioritize basic necessities such as whether to pay for child-care or medical care.

The American Chamber of Commerce Research Associates (ACCRA) Cost of Living Index is widely used in evaluating the costs, and the wages or salaries needed to meet those costs in a given area. The national average of all participating cities is 100%, with Durham's composite index at 89.5%.

Many low-skill jobs available to Work First participants in Durham County pay much less than what is needed to be economically self-sufficient according to the cost of living calculations for a family of four in the Durham Metropolitan Statistical Area. Nationally two adults with two school-aged children would need to earn \$3,442 per month in order to meet their family's basic needs [National Center for Children in Poverty]. However, according to the North Carolina Justice Center the figures specifically for Durham County are closer to \$3981 per month.

Using data from the 2008 Occupational Employment and Wages statistics for Durham County, the entry wage for cashiers is estimated at \$7.06 per hour, for food preparation and serving occupations \$6.85 per hour, retail salespersons \$7.15 per hour, and for telemarketers \$10.79 per hour (NC Employment Security Commission). These wages illustrate the difficulty of meeting a self-sufficiency standard in Durham County.

II. Planning Process

A. Planning Committee

List the members of your local planning committee. Include names and affiliations. Membership of the committee must include, but is not limited to, representatives of:

1. the county board of social services,
2. the board of the area mental health authority,
3. the local public health board,
4. the local school system(s),
5. the business community,
6. the board of county commissioners and

7. community-based organizations that are representative of the population to be served.

In addition, it is highly recommended that you include representatives of:

- 8. the local community transportation system,**
- 9. faith based organizations, and**
- 10. recipients of Work First and other types of assistance and services**
- 11. child welfare staff**

On August 25, 2008, Durham County’s Board of Commissioners officially approved a local planning committee of citizens to develop Durham County’s Work First Block Grant Plan for Fiscal year 2010-2011 Biennium. The membership of this committee consists of the following persons:

Jim Polk	Chair, Durham Citizen
Aurelia Sands Belle	Durham Crisis Response Center
Timica Brady	Durham Housing Authority
Mary Curtis	Durham JJDP
Alma Davis	Durham Crisis Response Center
Kevin Dick	Durham Workforce Development
Gladys Dunston	DSS Board
Terrance Gerald	Durham Housing Authority
Kathy Hoffmeier	Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce
Trish Hussey	Freedom House Recovery Center
Susan Jackson	Durham Technical College
Laura Jensen	Durham County – Budget Department
Lula Johnson	Triangle United Way
Clintess Johnson	Durham Housing Authority
Rev. Pebbles Lucas	Families First
Tamala McDowell	Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention
Jimmie Modlin	Employment Security Commission
Victoria Peterson	Triangle Citizens Rebuilding Communities
Matthew Ramadan	Durham Regional Financial Center
Erroll Reese	EWI Tech, Inc.
Donna Rewalt	Durham Cooperative Extension Office
Brenda Scurlock	Vocational Rehabilitation
Delphine Sellars	Durham Cooperative Extension Office
Selena Sullivan	Durham County Health Department
Karen Taylor	Citizen

Representatives from Social Services

Gail Angle	DSS – Child Protective Services
Angela Bellamy	DSS – Child Support
Tanya L. Best	DSS – Child Support
Jeanette Cobb	DSS – Family Crisis
Sammy R. Haithcock	DSS – Director
Charles C. Harris	DSS – Asst. Dir., Children Services
John Myklebust	DSS – Work First
Antonia Pedroza	DSS – Asst Dir, Accountability & Program Support
Patricia Pegues	DSS – Work First
Sharon Roane	DSS – DACCA
Wanda Smith	DSS – DACCA
Beth Steenberg	DSS – Planner/Evaluator
Rhonda Stevens	DSS – Asst. Dir., Family Economic Independence

B. Public Comment

Your plan must include documentation of your public comment process. Describe when and how public comments were received, the length of the comment period, and how the public was notified of the opportunity to comment.

Durham County used two major methods to solicit public comments for the county's Work First Plan.

Public Comment Period

A draft of Durham County's Work First Plan for 2010-2011 was made available for public comment at strategic locations throughout the county October 6 - 9, 2008, with the closing date to make public comments on the plan being October 13, 2008. A public announcement was placed in Durham-area newspapers asking for comments on the plan indicated the length of the comment period, the purpose of the plan and where the plan could be viewed.

The plan's placement included the Durham County and the Department of Social Service's websites, the County Manager's Office, the City Manager's Office, and at all local public library branches. The plan was made available at the Department of Social Services at 220 E. Main St. and 300 N. Duke St. as well as the Health Department and Durham Center Access. Copies were sent to Durham Public Schools Administration, the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, Durham Congregations in Action, Operation Breakthrough, North East Central Durham Economic Reinvestment, El Centro, the Durham Housing Authority, Cooperative Extension, the Employment Security Commission

and other community agencies which work with Work First participants and other low-income families.

On October 13, 2008 a public hearing was held at the Durham County Board of County Commissioners meeting to discuss Durham's draft Work First Plan and receive further public comments. The Planning Committee then revised the plan to incorporate the received public comments.

C. Planning Development

Describe the collaboration that led to the plan's development and the proposed process for continued collaboration and coordination to carry out the plan throughout the year. Include a discussion of the committee appointed by the county board of commissioners to identify the needs of the population to be served. How did this committee contribute to the review and development of the county block grant plan to respond to the identified needs? How was other public comment obtained and processed? How will this committee contribute to the county's implementation of the plan?

The Work First Planning Committee had a total of seven meetings in 2008 to prepare specifically for the Work First Plan; August 5, August 12, August 26, September 3, September 11, October 1 and October 15. Through these meetings, the committee identified the needs of the population to be served, discussed the economic conditions in Durham, recommended electing or standard county status, formulated strategies and recommendations for the plan and provided general input into the development of the Work First Plan. Minutes of each meeting are available for review.

Religious, civic and non-profit organizations involved in providing services to Work First participants were invited to formulate strategies and recommend how to best address the needs of the poor and low-income families of Durham County. The committee developed subcommittees to bring recommendations for discussion back to the larger committee to be included in the plan. These committees included: the Focus Group committee, Emergency Assistance committee, Mentoring committee, Child-Only committee, and Innovative Strategies committee.

One of the first tasks of the Work First Planning Committee was to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners whether Durham County should select Standard or Electing County status. The committee recommended Standard County status for Durham. On August 25, 2008, the BOCC approved the recommendation of the Planning Committee and submitted the county's Standard status to DHHS state on August 26, 2008. The Durham County Department of Social Services Board was

notified on August 27, 2008 of the committee's recommendation and the Board of County Commissioner's decision.

On October 15, 2008, the planning committee approved the final version of the Work First Plan and the plan was presented to the Department of Social Services' Board on October 22, 2008. The final plan was then submitted to the Board of County Commissioners and received approval on October 27, 2008. The approved plan was submitted to the North Carolina Division of Social Services as required by October 31, 2008.

The Board of County Commissioners agreed to extend the planning committee's existence so that it may continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of the plan on children and families of Durham County. The Planning Committee also plans to continue to meet throughout the 2010-2011 Plan period.

III. Outcomes and Goals for the County

A. Statewide Work First Goals

The NC Division of Social Services, in consultation with the county department of social services and county board of commissioners, will establish acceptable levels of performance by counties in meeting the following six Work First goals. You will receive additional information regarding county specific goals under separate cover.

The county was notified on September 25, 2008 that the method of establishing state goals has been changed by the state for this year. The only goal for 2008-2009 will be the "Participation Rate." The goals previously identified have been changed to "measurements." The state is in the process of enlisting the assistance of the University of North Carolina to devise a method of tracking those measurements. Durham County will continue to capture the measurements being considered by the state at this time. The following information shows Durham County's outcome for the Fiscal Year 2007 -2008 goals.

1. **Employment.** Self-sufficiency will be realized primarily through the employment of Work First clients. Employment is the primary avenue toward self-sufficiency for Work First clients. The state goal for Durham County's FY 2007-2008 was to place 56 participants into employment. Durham County placed 189 participants into employment which far exceeded the goal.

- 2. Meeting Federal Participation Rates.** Active participation in federal countable work activities will lead to full time employment. All counties will need to provide their work participation rates for the 12 calendar months prior to the month of submission of the new county plan. Active participation in federal countable work activities will lead to full time employment. Durham County's goal for FY 2007-2008 was to place 50% of "all-parent" and 90% of "two-parent" families into at least 35 weekly hours of countable work activities. Durham achieved 49.18%. The goal for "two-parent" families was 90% and Durham achieved 83.33%.
- 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. Active participation in intensive employment services for all families is necessary to ensure families are served adequately before the end of the five year time limits. 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. Durham County's goal is to provide intensive employment services to 80% of all-parent families and 100% of two-parent families. For FY 2007-2008 Durham County exceeded its goal with 93.75% for all-parent families, and the goal for two-parent households was 100% which Durham County reached.
- 4. 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. 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. Durham County's goal was to keep 90% of those who go to work off welfare for 12 months during the FY 2007-2008. The percentage of former participants in Durham County to remain off Work First after a year was 97%.
- 5. 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. This measure will be based on the number of responsible adults that leave Work First Family Assistance for employment who are still employed at 6 and 12 month intervals following termination. 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 in turn impacts a family's well being. This measure will be based on the number of responsible adults that leave Work First Family Assistance for employment who are still employed at 6 to 12 month intervals following termination. Durham County's goal is to have 60% of those who have been off Work First for 6 months earning income. For 2007-2008, 77.73% of those who left Work First for employment in Durham were still earning income after 6 months.

6. **Benefit Diversion.** The most successful outcome possible for an applicant for public assistance is to avoid the need to become a recipient. This is also recognized in the federal law, which specifies diversion from public assistance as a desired outcome. Use of Work First Diversion Assistance for a specified percentage or number of Work First applications will be established as a goal for each county. The most successful outcome possible is for an applicant to avoid the need to become a recipient. The goal for FY 2007-2008 was to provide diversion assistance to 272 families of which Durham County provided diversion assistance to 212 families.

B. County Developed Outcome Goals

Electing Counties: County boards of commissioners are responsible for establishing county outcome and performance goals (N.C.G.S.§108A.27.3)]. For Electing Counties, describe how you will document your progress toward these goals.

Standard Counties: County departments of social services, in consultation with NC DHHS and the county board of commissioners are responsible for establishing county outcome and performance goals (N.C.G.S.§108A-27.6)]. Describe how your county will measure the outcomes for each goal.

Durham County is a Standard County. Durham DSS will measure progress towards each of its outcomes by reviewing the monthly Work First Performance Reports. These reports are produced by the state and track each county's progress toward goal achievement.

Also, Durham DSS will monitor services offered by contracts to include performance and services provided to families based on those contracts.

Further, DSS will work closely with the state Work First representative to consider ways to continue to improve performance and ensure success in meeting its Work First outcomes for each goal.

1. Employment.

The plan will identify the number of adults that Durham County is responsible for putting to work. A collaboration of the services of Work First Employment Services, Employment Security Commission, Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Durham Technical Community College as well as human service agencies, non-profits, faith-based organizations, civic entities and the business communities will be used to achieve this goal.

2. Meeting Federal Participation Rates.

The plan reflects the family participation rates as outlined by federal legislation.

3. Providing Employment Services.

Durham County will provide intensive services to all families subject to Work First time limits.

4. Benefit Diversion.

Durham County will evaluate each applicant through a joint assessment by a team of a cash assistance worker and an employment services worker to determine whether diversion is the most successful plan for the family.

5. Staying Off Welfare.

Retention of employment will ensure that families will not return to welfare. Durham County will provide participants the necessary job skills and job readiness training through Center for Employment Training (CET), Durham Technical Community College, Easy Web, Inc., Employment Security Commission and others. The county will also provide supportive and retention services to families that earn less than 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.

6. Job Retention.

Durham County will use the state data collected in the 6th and 12th month after leaving Work First.

IV. Plans to Achieve the Outcomes and Goals**A. Activities**

Describe the activities that will be available to participants to enable your program to meet the goals listed above. What agencies or organizations in your community will provide these activities, and where will they take place? Include both public and private resources. How will these activities contribute to meeting the goals? If your county will operate a work supplementation program, describe the program. All counties will need to provide discussion of

their strategies for increasing their work participation rate while ensuring that family centered services are provided to Work First applicants and recipients.

1. Employment

Strategy 1: The Department of Social Services will send a congratulatory letter to recipients who have gone to work outlining services such as Food Stamps, Medicaid/Health Choice, Earned Income Tax Credit, Transportation and Child Care for which they may be eligible. Instructions on how to continue or apply for these services will also be included. This letter will also encourage recipients to work with their Work First worker if problems arise with their job. To those for whom it has been determined have issues with literacy, language or other communication barriers, attempts will be made to reach those clients in a way they will be able to understand.

Strategy 2: The Work First Section has an on-site staff person from Freedom House to conduct assessments and referrals for suspected substance abuse. Outside treatment and other services will occur as deemed necessary. This will be a joint effort with the Department of Social Services and Freedom House and will occur at the Department of Social Services.

Strategy 3: The Work First Section will enroll hard-to-place participants in the Center for Employment Training (CET) program. The training will occur at the CET location at the Golden Belt Center. Work First Employment Services staff will monitor the participants' progress. Monthly reports will measure progress toward this goal.

Strategy 4: The Work First staff will continue to refer participants to the on-site counselor for Durham Crisis Response Center for domestic violence assessments and counseling services.

Strategy 5: DSS will strive to establish On-The-Job training programs with employers for difficult-to-employ participants. These efforts will be closely coordinated with Employment Security Commission and the Chamber of Commerce's job development representatives.

Strategy 6: Work First staff will continue to conduct an individual assessment of each applicant. The information gathered from participants will include the participant's family composition, work history, education and employment skills. This information will be used to develop a mutual responsibility agreement and to provide

support services for participants. In an effort to work more effectively with participants with multiple barriers, Work First will continue to explore ways to provide a more detailed educational and training assessment that would better address the participants' individual needs.

Strategy 7: DSS will meet with a select group of local physicians to discuss the importance of medical history and documentation in securing long-term benefits such as re-training, disability or employment for families.

Strategy 8: DSS will continue the monthly Success Team meetings. The Success Team is an interdisciplinary group representing various agencies or supportive service groups which develops an action plan for individuals transitioning from Work First. This model incorporates many of the same principles as Durham County's System of Care model in providing service to adults.

Strategy 9: DSS will explore expanding the Workplace Coaches program in cooperation with community agencies. These agencies and organizations could recruit volunteers, match the volunteers with Work First clients and provide volunteer training. It is noted that a contract is currently in place to enlist churches to provide mentoring services and support through a faith-based organization.

DSS will continue to look for opportunities to provide additional mentoring services designed to address various issues. The beneficiaries of these services could be participants that have been revolving through the system and are repeating the same cycles in their lives and want help, or first time participants coming in and showing signs of needed support systems to deal with personal issues.

2. Meeting Federal Participation Rates.

Strategy 1: DSS will continue the joint cash assistance and employment services' assessment process and the intense case management process for individuals applying for Work First. Individuals will begin their job readiness/job search activities at the time of application. The participants will meet with the Employment Security Commission and the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce job placement representatives and the Freedom House representatives. This will occur at the Department of Social Services.

Strategy 2: DSS will continue to identify and provide specialized supportive services to participants with 30+ months used on their lifetime clock.

3. Providing Employment Services.

Strategy 1: Work First Employment Services staff will continue to provide supportive services to families participating in work-related activities.

Strategy 2: Work First applicants/participants who have had a history of being denied or terminated for failing to keep appointments or failing to comply with their Mutual Responsibility Agreement or who have had difficulty in retaining employment will be referred to the Job Achievers and Development Academy (JADA) classes and to Job Seeking, Attitude Motivation, Maintain (JAMM).

4. Benefit Diversion.

Strategy 1: DSS will evaluate each Work First applicant to determine whether his or her needs can be met by receiving diversion assistance.

5. Staying Off Welfare.

Strategy 1: CET staff will monitor the individuals that complete the CET program.

Strategy 2: DSS will continue to link families with the faith community through the Families First program. The faith community will provide services and emotional support to help participants retain employment (i.e. transportation, tutoring, mentoring).

Strategy 3: DSS will assign all Work First cases terminated because of employment, time limits or received a Benefit Diversion to the Transition Team to monitor for up to one year.

Strategy 4: Child Support workers will see Work First applicants immediately upon application for services. The Work First caseworkers will make certain that each participant sent to Child Support have the proper identification to sign Affidavits.

Strategy 5: Child Support workers will partner with Work First staff to share information by offering ACTS Inquiry training and by extending and accepting invitations to section meetings. This

interaction will enhance service to participants in both the Child Support and Work First programs.

Strategy 6: DSS will involve the Nutrition Division of the Durham County Health Department in providing education to Work First participants on how to maintain food security after entering the workforce, how to purchase and prepare healthy foods, how to control chronic illnesses with dietary compliance, and how to stay physically active most days of the week. This education will help Work First participants improve food security and make healthier food choices for optimal nutritional health, both of which have been scientifically linked to work productivity. Through the DINE for LIFE program (Durham's Innovative Nutrition Education for Lasting Improvements in Fitness and Eating) Food and Nutrition Services eligible families will continue to receive quarterly newsletters promoting healthier food choices and active lifestyles. Newsletters and community nutrition sessions at various community venues (i.e. low-income housing developments, transitional homes/shelters) will promote menu planning on a limited budget, the consumption of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, etc. with "target nutrition and health messages." The health messages will be reinforced on bus posters, in the newspapers, and on the radio.

Another avenue of nutrition education is the Inter-Faith Food Shuttle collaborating with Durham County Health Department community nutritionists and local restaurant chefs to offer "Operation Frontline" interactive nutrition and cooking classes throughout the Durham Community (local churches, evening classes at target or "at-risk" schools, housing developments, transitional homes) to address hunger and ensure that people with limited incomes can offer their families nutritious meals that are balanced, tasty, healthy, economical and safe.

6. Job Retention.

Strategy 1: Work First staff will contact families in which the adult is included on the case to assess the transportation needs of the family.

Strategy 2: DSS will continue to provide employment related supportive services to families who have income at or below 200% of the poverty level.

Strategy 3: DSS will refer employed Work First participants to the Money Wise training program.

B. Supportive Services

Describe the supportive services that will enable individuals to participate in the activities described above. What services will be provided? Who will carry them out? Where will they take place?

The supportive services and activities have been included for each goal listed in IV. A. In addition, Durham County plans to offer support services of transportation, child care, counseling, substance abuse referrals and treatment, retention services and transitional benefits.

V. Administration**A. Authority**

Will authority for administration of the Work First Program be delegated to an entity or agency other than the board of county commissioners [Electing Counties] or the county department of social services [Standard Counties]? If so, name and describe that entity or agency. (Notwithstanding any delegation of duty, the county board of commissioners shall remain accountable for its duties under the Work First Program.)

The authority for the administration of the Work First Program will be designated to the Durham County Department of Social Services.

B. Organization

Describe your agency's organization for the purposes listed below. Describe any collaborative arrangements (such as co-location of staff) you have with other agencies, such as ESC, WIA, JobLink Centers, etc.

- 1. Intake**
- 2. Emergency assistance**
- 3. Employability assessment**
- 4. Employment services**
- 5. Other supportive services**
- 6. Eligibility determination**

Are you consolidating functions such as employment services and eligibility?

The Department of Social Services' Family Economic Independence Division will provide Work First Cash Assistance, Employment Services, Child Care Services, Child Support Services, Food Stamps and Medicaid.

Services will be delivered directly by DSS personnel, contracts, or Memorandums of Understanding with other community agencies. These community agencies each has a representative located within the DSS office (e.g., Employment Security Commission, Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, Freedom House in partnership with The Durham Center, Durham Crisis Response Center and Vocational Rehabilitation). The One-Stop/Job Link Center in Durham is used as a part of the application process with a Job Link Center located in the Work First area of the Department of Social Services.

Each individual that comes in to request Work First services receives an individual assessment from a team of Work First Cash Assistance and Employment Services workers. The assessment and orientation process varies depending on the individual. Individuals who are working with one or more service provider within the agency or have a history of public assistance will receive more intensive assessments than new applicants. The purpose of the assessments is to ensure that all families who apply for Work First are thoroughly assessed as a part of their eligibility determination and provided the full complement of services needed to facilitate their move to self-sufficiency.

The Family Crisis Unit provides counseling and financial assistance to families with children in their homes. The family must meet income guidelines and have a crisis that is resolvable with the funds provided. Women-In-Action, Presbyterian Urban Ministries, Salvation Army, and Operation Breakthrough are agencies which work collaboratively with the DSS in assisting families who are experiencing financial hardships.

A DSS organizational chart is included as **Attachment 1**.

C. First Stop

Describe the arrangement between your agency and your local ESC regarding First Stop registration. Describe any services for which you are contracting or will contract with ESC to provide.

Your plan must include a copy of your current memorandum of understanding with ESC concerning First Stop registration.

The Department of Social Services has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Employment Security Commission to operate the First Stop Program which will provide employability screening for all participants who wish to apply for Work First. The participants first apply for Work First at DSS followed by a visit to the Employment Security Commission within 10 days for an employability screening in order to complete the application process.

DSS also has a contract with Employment Security Commission and the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce to provide job placement services. An employment counselor from each agency is co-located at the DSS office. The contract costs for services with Employment Security Commission are reflected in the Work First budget. The First Stop Memorandum of Understanding with the Employment Security Commission has been included as **Attachment 2**.

D. Child Care

Describe how your county will prioritize its subsidized child care services.

Child care continues to be a vital service necessary for Work First participants to obtain and maintain employment. Durham County has been able to make child care services available to all of its Work First participants who are in need. Work First families are one of the priority groups for child care services and are second only to child care services for Child Protective Services and Special Needs Children.

To provide better quality child care and customer service, DSS has relocated its child care services to a location that is adjacent to two of the major child care service providers in Durham County: Durham's Partnership for Children and Child Care Services Association. The County operates a unified child care service in collaboration with Durham's Partnership for Children, Child Care Services Association and Operation Breakthrough, which is the umbrella agency for Head Start. This unified system of child care, called Durham's Alliance for Child Care Access (DACCA), operates as a one-stop provider. Families can receive child care subsidies, information and referrals for child care, education and written materials about quality child care, and transportation services. In addition, a DSS child care social worker is located at the Duke Street DSS office to address the child care needs and provide information and referral services for Work First families regarding choosing and using quality child care.

Durham County does not have a waiting list for eligible families who may apply for child care. Services are made available through a combination of funds from state and federal dollars. DACCA also receives some funding from United Way to address the needs of families that may not meet the criteria for funding from our other funding sources.

E. Transportation

Describe in detail how the transportation needs of Work First participants will be met through local coordination and collaboration. What arrangements do you have with your local transportation system? What private transportation resources have you developed? Will your agency continue to support the transportation needs of former Work First recipients who are working and no longer Work First eligible? Give an estimate of the amount of funds from your Work First Block Grant that will be allocated for transportation services.

Transportation continues to be a challenge in Durham County. However, Durham has been able to meet most transportation needs through the use of TANF and Department of Transportation funds. Funds have been used to purchase bus passes, provide shuttle services to and from work, pay for vehicle repairs and related fees for cars owned by participants who have gone to work and need car repairs or insurance to continue their employment. The Department of Social Services has used its agency van to transport participants for training and testing, and has also shared costs with employers who were willing to provide transportation to and from work for Work First participants. Durham Area Transit Authority (DATA), Durham's public transportation authority, has continued to expand its routes. DATA currently runs from 5:30 am till 12:30 AM on Monday to Saturday and on Sunday from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm. The Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) provides services in some areas as late as 11:00 p.m. Transportation is also being provided by DATA to the Brier Creek area in Raleigh because of the availability of jobs. This service is funded through FTA's Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grant. Although these changes represent progress in the transportation area, much still needs to be done for transportation for Work First low-income families.

It is anticipated that Durham County will continue to use its transportation funds to make transportation more accessible for Work First participants, especially to those who are employed and who no longer receive cash assistance. DSS collaborates with other community agencies to obtain donated vehicles for Work First participants who have transportation needs when they become employed.

F. Substance Abuse Services

Describe in detail your collaboration with the area authority for mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services to provide assessments and treatment.

Include a copy of the local Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the LME.

DSS has established a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Durham Center, the area Mental Health Authority, for services to be provided by Freedom House for Durham County residents. The Durham Center has arranged for the Freedom House to provide training to DSS staff in screening for substance abuse issues and directly provide individual Substance Abuse Assessments for each person screened with qualifying criteria.

The MOA with the Durham Center also makes substance abuse and mental health treatment services available to those electing to avail themselves of such services. Freedom House staff are located at the DSS Work First office to accomplish these responsibilities. The on-site staff member is responsible for coordinating treatment for those Work First eligible persons who are assessed with an abuse or dependency diagnosis. Freedom House opens a medical record for all eligible Work First individuals who consent to treatment related to their substance diagnosis. Freedom House's assessment also identifies other mental health issues and coordinates services as deemed appropriate. Treatment services need to be clinically identified as medically necessary and will be provided within the limitations of available resources.

Please see **Attachment 3** for the MOA with the Durham Center.

G. Family Violence Option

Describe your arrangements for providing Family Violence Option waivers (See Work First Manual Section 104D) and your plans for coordinating with domestic violence service agencies in your area to provide services to victims of domestic violence.

The Department of Social Services has a contractual agreement with the Durham Crisis Response Center for on-site screening and assessment services for Work First families and Child Protective Services families who receive Work First. All Work First applicants are notified of the family violence services and the availability to speak with an on-site counselor. The family violence option is reviewed periodically with participants while Mutual Responsibility Agreements are developed or during their review for eligibility.

H. Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

List the activities, staff, and services that will be funded using Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds. It is expected that each county will spend MOE timely throughout the year to avoid last minute MOE expenditures. Counties that fail to meet its MOE may be subject to a

corrective action plan (N.C.G.S. § 108A-27.12). Further, the Department may use the county's block grant to secure needed services for families in that county or reduce block grant allocations to counties that fail to meet MOE requirements.

Work First Plan Budget		
Expense	FY10 Budget	FY11 Budget
STAFF	6,371,954	6,579,043
TANF Emergency Assistance	\$600,000	\$600,000
Ongoing Client Services	\$509,496	\$509,496
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$7,481,450	\$7,688,539
Revenue:		
Work First Block Grant	\$2,841,482	\$2,841,482
County Share	\$4,639,968	\$4,847,057
TOTAL REVENUE	\$7,481,450	\$7,688,539

I. Child Welfare Services

Give an estimate of how much of your Work First Block Grant you will devote to Child Welfare Services.

The Department of Social Services has thirty Child Protective Services investigative positions that are supported in part or in full with TANF funds. TANF funds are also used to support administrative and supervisory costs in compliance with our approved cost allocation plan.

Communication between child welfare staff and Work First staff is a high priority for the agency and DSS has developed strategies to foster better communication and partnership between these two programs.

VI. Emergency Assistance

Describe your Emergency Assistance policies and procedures. For requirements, see Work First Manual Section 003, VIII. Each county must list the amount of your Work First Block declared for Emergency Assistance.

The amount of the Work First Block Grant set aside for emergency assistance is \$600,000 per year for the period of this grant. Both the Child Welfare Section and the Family Crisis Unit will be responsible for administering TANF EA funds.

Durham County will provide Emergency Assistance primarily to families that meet certain "need" requirements in addition to receiving Work First assistance and having lived for at least 90 days in the county. The application period for TANF EA will be the fiscal year July 1 through June 30. One or more applications for TANF EA cannot exceed \$400 for the fiscal year. If the individual requesting assistance is not employed, appropriate referrals will be made to the Employment Security Commission, Workforce Investment Act, Vocational Rehabilitation, Child Support and other community based programs. Staff will refer individuals receiving Work First in need of domestic violence services to on-site staff for those services and refer individuals not receiving Work First to the local agency.

Additional resources earmarked for heating and cooling needs will also be available from the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) and the Emergency Energy Fund (EEF). CIP has a benefit limit of \$600 per fiscal year. EEF has a benefit limit of \$200 per year. Other financial assistance programs available to customers include County Emergency Assistance (CoEA), Direct Medical (funded by United Way), Water Hardship Program (WHF) which is funded by the City of Durham.

TANF EA will not be used for rental deposits unless the customer is receiving a Section 8 Certificate or is moving into public housing for the first time. Child Welfare can pay rental deposits directly to the vendor in order to insure safety for the customer and the funds. Section 8 and public housing will result in affordable monthly rent for the customer. TANF EA will not be used for recurring relocation deposits for Section 8 and/or public housing. Customers who receive a utility allowance must provide documentation that they have used the allowance to pay a utility before they will be eligible to apply for TANF EA.

Work First participants who are in a sanction or penalty status will not be eligible for emergency assistance unless the status of the case changes for the family. Also, any intentional program violation that may result in an agency sanction and/or overpayment may result in a Work First customer's inability to receive assistance through TANF EA, COEA (County Emergency Assistance, and/or EEF (Emergency Energy Fund).

The economy has had a tremendous impact on the number of new applicants in financial crisis. Individual assessments will be made for customers who have no verifiable means of maintaining their living situations. Staff will assist customers who are experiencing a crisis if they have a verifiable means of earned or unearned income (Wages, SSI, SSA, Child Support, etc.) Staff will verify if the customer has had recent employment within the last 90 days and assist them. Customers who are working will be counseled on the Earned Income Tax Credit and VITA Program. VITA provides assistance in completing tax returns.

Staff may require chronic emergency assistance users to register and attend a Money Wise class, an agency-sponsored Financial Literacy program. Customers who fail to attend the 90 minute class may be ineligible for future assistance through TANF EA, CIP, CoEA or EEF.

Emergency Assistance staff will continue to utilize the Community Assistance Database (CADB), a computer program that allows DSS and community partners to track financial assistance provided to our customers. Staff will continue to work closely with our community partner agencies, including Presbyterian Urban Ministries, The Salvation Army, Second Mile Ministries, The Catholic Love Fund, City of Durham and others.

VII. Services to Low Income Families (under 200% of poverty).

Describe your policies and procedures for these services, as discussed in Work First Manual Section 003, IX. As a reminder, providing 200% services is no longer optional. Each county must list the amount of your Work First Block declared for low income families under 200% of the poverty level threshold.

Durham County will provide services to families in which the adult is included on the cash benefits with an income at or below 200% of the poverty level to assist in obtaining or retaining employment. The amount set aside for 200% eligible support for FY2009-2010 and FY2010-2011 is \$509,496 per year.

Durham County will provide ongoing client services, including transportation (primarily car repairs, reimbursements and bus passes), employment related equipment needs, special mandated clothing or shoes (uniforms), medically related needs for work not covered by Medicaid (special test, exams, etc.), cost of special license needed (not to exceed \$50.00 per individual). Other work-related expenses will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The county will frequently monitor spending patterns in this area to ensure that there are sufficient funds available for mandatory participants.

Durham County will also provide Emergency Assistance to families who have a total gross income of 200% of the poverty level or below. Refer to section above for emergency assistance criteria.

VIII. Services to Non-Custodial Parents.

Describe your policies and procedures for these services, as discussed in Work First Manual Section 003, X. If you choose not to provide these optional services, include a statement to that effect.

Durham County will not provide services to non-custodial parents as outlined in Work First Manual Section 003.

IX. Exemption from the Work Requirement

Describe your county policy regarding exempting single custodial parents of children under age one from the work requirement. See Work First Manual Section 003, XI. If you do not specify a policy in your plan, there will be no exemption in your county.

Durham County has a three-month exemption policy for single custodial parents with a child under the age one for the first three months who have not previously exhausted their 3 month or 12 month limit.

Optional Plan Elements

The following are optional sections that counties may want to include:

X. Innovative County Strategies

Describe activities or initiatives in your county that are innovative in meeting the goals of the Work First Program. These activities or initiatives may have already been described elsewhere in the plan; however, this is a place to showcase your innovations. This may include a discussion on your demonstration grant project. If so, be specific in identifying this as a demonstration grant project.

For example: Does your county have an innovative way to address domestic violence or literacy issues? What approach do you find successful in working with long-term recipient families? What is your strategy for serving adults with disabilities?

1. Durham County will conduct periodic Focus Groups of recipients, parents, employers, staff and the community to gather information on the

program to be shared with the Planning Committee and staff for future planning.

2. The Durham County Department of Social Services will organize a workforce committee to ensure that Work First clients are connected with employment opportunities at new and/or expanding industries, in particular those companies who have received incentives from Durham County. The committee will develop the protocol to determine how to place more Work First participants at those companies. The Committee will consist of representatives from the Department of Social Services, Employment Security Commission, Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, County Manager's office, Durham Technical Community College, Workforce Development Board, and the Office of Economic Development. The Committee will also document the employment results.
3. Opportunities are sought for increasing the number of faith-based and community organizations who work with Work First clients to aid in their transition from welfare to work. This is being accomplished through participating with the efforts.
4. Durham County DSS receives funds through the state Demonstration Grant Project. DSS uses these funds to engage Work First customers in pre-employment activities and preparation, finding employment and providing support in their employment.

XI. Special Issues

Describe any special issues or conditions in your county that could affect operation of the Work First Program.

1. **Child Only Cases.** There is a need for services and financial support for many low-income families in which relatives are raising children whose parents are absent from the home. These families often struggle financially but are not eligible for Foster Care or TANF services. If eligible for TANF funds, the amounts do not cover the cost for caring for the child(ren). They are often not eligible for Food and Nutrition Services and other supportive services. A Kinship Care program has begun in Durham County to assist kinship caregivers in meeting the needs of youth who would otherwise have entered foster care.
2. **Housing.** The climate for accessing and maintaining housing, whether it be rented or owned, is challenging for many residents in the current economic climate. According to the Durham Housing Authority, as of September 2008, 70 Work First families were in public housing and 91 Work First were in the Housing Choice Voucher system (Section 8). There is a focus group that has met to address this issue. This group consists of representatives from affordable housing agencies, public

housing, Work First and other social service agencies. Work First staff will continue to assess client’s basic needs at intake and review and refer clients to appropriate agencies in Durham County.

- 3. **Resources.** Durham County has many resources in the community, mostly government, non-profit or faith-based. The paper version of the resources list may not be always up-to-date. Work First will ensure that the list of available resources is accurate and complete. Also, Work First will encourage the use of the “211” social services resource number sponsored by United Way by both Work First consumers and staff.

REQUIRED FOR ALL COUNTIES

XII. Certification

Your County Block Grant Plan must include certification, signed by the Chairman, that it was approved by the County Board of Commissioners.

The Board of Commissioners of Durham County voted on the attached revised Durham County Work First Block Grant Plan on October 27, 2008. The vote was unanimous to approve the plan.



 Commissioner Chair Signature

10/27/08

 Date

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