Assistant Director's Report

DSS Family Economic and Independence (FEI) September 2026 Board Report

10/06/2026

FEI APPLICATIONS:

Total Applications Taken by Program:

Food & Nutrition Services	Work First Cash Assistance	Refugee Cash Assistance	Total Applications Taken
2,035	162	0	2,197

Applications Pending:

Food and Nutrition Services	Work First Cash Assistance	Refugee Cash Assistance	Total Applications Pending
908	98	0	1,006

Total Applications Disposed by Program:

Food & Nutrition Services	Work First Cash Assistance	Refugee Cash Assistance	Total Applications Disposed
2,222	156	0	2,378

Total Applications Approved by Program:

Food and Nutrition Services	Work First Cash Assistance	Refugee Cash Assistance	Total Applications Approved
1,111	20	0	1,131

Total Applications Withdrawn:

Food & Nutrition Services	Work First Cash Assistance	Refugee Cash Assistance	Total Applications Withdrawn
123	84	0	207

Total Applications Denied by Program:

Food and Nutrition Services	Work First Cash Assistance	Refugee Cash Assistance	Total Applications Denied
988	52	0	1,040

*Data Source: Data Warehouse/NC Fast

Durham's FNS Applications Timeliness:	Durham's WFFA Applications Timeliness:
Regular Timeliness = 94.69%	100%
Expedite Timeliness = 96.75%	

CHILDCARE SERVICES

As of October 05, 2026, there are no families remaining on the Childcare Subsidy Waitlist.

Childcare Subsidy Waitlist Priority Groups are:

1. Child Protective Services (CPS)
2. Child Welfare Services (CWS)
3. Children in DSS custody (Foster Care). The foster parent or custodial parent is employed or in school.
4. Families in Work First who have a current Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA) and receive active services.
5. Teen Parents
6. Siblings (including newborns) with families who are already receiving services.
7. Provide Childcare for 25% of the maximum allowed 64 children identified by Durham Early Head Start as enrollees of the Early Head Start –CCP Grant Award, ages 0 to 4 transition out of EHS program, also eligible for DSS Childcare Subsidy.
8. Children with special needs and families experiencing homelessness. (4% Vulnerable Populations Set-Aside)

# of Children enrolled in Early Head Start (EHS) Grant Award Recipients September 2026:
22

# of children enrolled in Head Start (HS) and North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten program (NC PreK) added to DSS wait list September 2026: **0**

Attrition. Calculated by adding the new vouchers issued and subtracting the number of children terminated September 2026: **Added: 86 Terminated: 114 Total FY 2026-2027**

Title IV-E children (Foster Care Placements) receiving Childcare Subsidy September 2026:
45 Children (Total Children Served)

Homeless/Shelter Children served as of September 2026: **42 Children**

Durham County Childcare Subsidy Preliminary Spending Coefficient August Service Month/September Payment Month 2026: 70.05 % **(*State Preliminary Spending Coefficient August Service Month/September Payment Month: 71.39%***

Number of County Transfers to Durham County in September 2026: **Added-12 Families**
23 Families YTD 2026-2027

Programming Updates:

- Currently accepting applications.
- **Staffing**: Currently Child Care is fully staff. We have one new employee beginning on Monday, October 12, 2026, and the last candidate accepted the position last week of September and is working on the completion of the required background checks. The More Than a Job NC position has been filled and we are currently reviewing applications for the Work First position and will begin interviewing within the next few weeks.
- **Program Initiatives**: Both Child Care and Work First are continuing initiatives underway to improve efficiency, timeliness, accountability, and service delivery for families.

1. **<u>Project 95</u> (Child Care Subsidy)**: Project 95 is showing positive progress, and within the first 30 days we are already seeing the impact. More parents are submitting their shows positive progress, and within the first 30 days we are already seeing the impact. More parents are submitting their recertifications timely, applications are being processed, and families are picking up their vouchers. We are very pleased with the early results.

   We also recognize that we have added a temporary administrative staff member to support Child Care Subsidy. This individual has previous child care experience and is assisting with reminder calls to families regarding upcoming recertifications. This additional support allows our social workers to remain focused on processing recertifications and changes with minimal interruptions.

   The added support has also provided social workers with greater flexibility to complete home visits for elderly or medically fragile caretakers who are serving as responsible adults for children, as well as employment-related visits when needed. These visits help accommodate parents and caretakers who may have work schedule conflicts or transportation barriers that make it difficult to come to the agency to sign for and pick up their vouchers.

   As we continue Project 95, we will monitor data to determine whether these improvements are sustained and evaluate the impact of both the pilot process and temporary staffing support.

2. **<u>Work First 5-10-20-30 Project</u>**: Work First pilot is also showing progress. For September, we had no overdue applications or recertifications, which is a significant improvement.

   We recognize that two temporary staff are currently providing additional support. We are reviewing our processes and application volume to better understand the impact of the pilot, determine how much of the improvement is related to the additional staffing, and assess the staffing level needed to sustain these results.

   Moving forward, out docus will be on whether we can maintain timely processing while continuing to evaluate what is working, what may need to be adjusted, and what resources are necessary for long-term success.

FEI RECERTIFICATIONS:

Participants Summary – September 2026		
Program	**Cases**	**Participants**
Food and Nutrition Services	**14,861**	**28,989**
Work First – Child Only and Refugee Cash	**69**	**94**
Work First Benefit	**21**	**44**
Benefit Diversion	**0**	**0**
Total:	**14,951**	**29,127**

**Data Source: Data Warehouse / NC Fast*

Recertifications – September 2026			
Program	**Recertifications Due**	**Recertifications Completed**	**Timeliness %**
Food Nutrition Services	**1,973**	**1,431**	**97.69%**
Work First – Child Only and Refugee Cash	**9**	**9**	**100%**
Total:	**1,981**	**1,440**	**98.84%**

**Data Source: Data Warehouse / NC Fast*

Human Service Technician (HST) Unit Summary for September 2026

Effective February 2026 the 4 HSTs are working collectively to support the Food and Nutrition Services Applications and Recertifications Teams.

- 4 HSTs submitted 293 FNS paper applications, 50 Late Recertifications, scanned, uploaded, and routed 730 emails received via the FNSverifications@dconc.gov email box.