



2019-2020 – N.C. General Assembly Social Services Consortium Legislative Priorities

1. Provide adequate funding at the local departments of social services for adult protective services and guardianship. Ensure greater protection of this population by evaluating current state laws while also improving behavioral health services for vulnerable, older and disabled adults.

- North Carolina’s elderly and disabled adult populations deserve a system where they are guaranteed the most basic necessities of life and where they can be safe.
- In SFY 2018, \$26.2M was expended on Adult Protective Services and of that amount, 0% was state funds (\$1474), 81.5% county and 18.5% federal.
- In SFY 2018, \$26.3M was expended on Public Guardianship and of that amount 0.3% was state funds, 56.6% county and 43.1% federal. Caseload statewide has increased 50%.
- Commission a comprehensive study of APS and Guardianship by nationally recognized organization to determine statute changes needed, practice model, performance standards driven by a CQI system, in depth assessment of funding and assessment of mental health services needed to ensure adequate services available.

2. Amend applicable General Statutes regarding Medicaid Eligibility Determination and apply a cap for claim against county departments of social services. Ensure a state level appeals process prior to an assessment for reimbursement.

- Apply federal accuracy rate threshold as baseline for counties.
- Implement appeals process for counties prior to implementing claim for reimbursement.
- Place cap on claim amount at 5% or \$5,000 whichever is less.
- Allow for waiver if county can demonstrate financial hardship.

3. Preserve Federal and State Block Grants for county administered programs (TANF, SSBG, CSBG, CCDBG, HCCBG), oppose unfunded mandates, and prevent unnecessary workload increases to counties (including shifting state responsibilities to counties).

Federal DHHS Block Grants should be used to support the programs and services for which the grants were originally established. The existing state funds appropriated for the related programs should not be reduced and replaced with any additional block grants the State receives.

4. Support the recommendation of the Social Services Working Group (established per SL 2017-41, Section 1) regarding NC FAST.

- Recommendations:
 - Immediately reexamine the plan to use NC FAST for the aspects of the child welfare and adult services programs that require case management functionality. Success of social services system reform requires an information system that adequately supports county administration, allows counties to share information with one another, enables the state to support and monitor program administration at the county level, and provides clear and reliable information to the public. Reevaluation of the use of NC FAST is critical and time-sensitive (Rec. 4.a).
 - Continually improve all NC FAST modules (Rec. 4.b). • Clarify policies related to inter-county assistance (Rec.4.b)