



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

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March 6, 2024

Sharon Barlow, Director
Guilford County Department of Social Services
1203 Maple Street
P.O. Box 3388
Greensboro, NC 27402

Victor Isler, Assistant County Manager
Guilford County
301 West Market Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Michael Halford, County Manager
Guilford County
301 West Market Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Commissioner Melvin Alston
Guilford County Board of Commissioners
301 West Market Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Dear Director Barlow, Mr. Isler, Mr. Halford and Mr. Alston,

On May 16, 2023, the North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) issued a letter requiring Guilford County Department of Social Services (GCDSS) to develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address identified violations. The CAP was approved by NCDSS on July 14, 2023.

The CAP was reviewed on October 16, 2023. During the meeting, it was agreed that GCDSS had developed and was in the process of implementing the plan and GCDSS will continue to demonstrate through practice that the implemented processes and protocols are accomplishing the desired outcomes. It was also agreed that NCDSS would continue to partner with GCDSS to assist in the successful completion of the CAP through ongoing monitoring of case files, onsite technical assistance, and the review of implemented processes and protocols.

The CAP was reviewed on January 16, 2024 when the Regional Child Welfare Specialist shared with GCDSS the results of ongoing reviews of safety assessments, updated data reports to determine the number of cases

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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open beyond 45 days, and to assess progress of the interaction with court partners to address the inequities demonstrated in the court. It was reported that:

- 1) GCDSS has made progress in addressing the number of children placed with Kin
- 2) GCDSS has made progress in submitting detailed court reports allowing the court to make a better decision in the child's best interest.
- 3) A review of Safety Assessments from October and November 23 showed that 57% were completed correctly. The themes that were identified for continued work were:
 - a. Clearly identifying, speaking with, and documenting the use of a safety resource including the safety resources signature.
 - b. Ensuring that the activities the parents were going to take to keep their child safe were behaviorally specific.
- 4) GCDSS was continuing to work through the best process to address their backlog of CPS Assessments that were open more than 45 days.

GCDSS responded by creating a team to work solely on the backlog of open assessments to ensure a timely closure. GCDSS also created an internal team for real time review of safety assessments, feedback/correction and a plan for weekly random review of safety assessments to ensure they are adequately addressing safety concerns.

The review of the CAP was ongoing between NCDSS and GCDSS. On February 19, 2024 in a meeting with leadership from GCDSS and NCDSS, the following updates were shared by GCDSS:

- 1) Made progress in reducing the number of cases open more than 45 days
- 2) Three program managers are now responsible for reviewing all safety assessments
- 3) Their Quality Assurance(QA) Team is actively reviewing safety assessments for timely feedback
- 4) Over the last month the number of cases initiated timely has increased by 50%
- 5) Nine Permanency cases were closed with the children being reunified with their caretakers.
- 6) 17 adoptions have been finalized.

NCDSS will continue to partner with GCDSS to assist in the successful completion of the CAP through ongoing monitoring of case files, onsite technical assistance, and the review of implemented processes and protocols.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (828) 785-8253 or peter.west@dhhs.nc.gov

Sincerely,

Peter L. West
Section Chief for County Operations

Cc: Lisa Cauley, Senior Director of Human Services
Rajeev Premakumar, NCDHHS Deputy General Counsel
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Katie Swanson, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Operations
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