

Buncombe County Agenda Item Information Sheet

AGENDA ITEM: Budget Amendment for Additional Staffing related to NC FAST (North Carolina Families Access Services through Technology)	
MEETING DATE: January 07, 2014	
REQUESTED BY: Jim Holland for Amanda L. Stone	
Background information NC FAST is a new state developed and implemented system that is being used to determine eligibility for all public assistance programs within Health & Human Services. The Affordable Care Act requires a centralized access point for applying for benefits as well as the ability to communicate with the Federally-Facilitated Marketplace. North Carolina is implementing NC FAST in stages. Food and Nutrition Services was implemented first (over one year ago). Medicaid, by far the most complicated system, is now being implemented statewide. The legacy state computer system is over thirty years old and does not meet federal requirements. Transitioning to the new system has required significant county investment as well as significant additional staff time. In order to meet the additional requirements for NC FAST, seventeen new positions are being requested. Twelve of the positions requested are Income Maintenance Caseworker II positions and five of the positions are Income Maintenance Supervisor II positions.	
Pro's These additional staff will allow us to meet the mandated time standards for processing benefits and assure that citizens applying for services are adequately screened and eligibility is determined correctly. The additional staff time and information required for using NC FAST is a result of federally-mandated requirements that must be met as outlined in the Affordable Care Act.	Con's Without the additional staff and supervision, time standards for applications and reviews are likely to be exceeded. This will result in potential penalties to the county, citizens not receiving benefits within mandated times, and the possibility of eligibility being determined incorrectly, which could result in substantial penalties for the County.
Funds required The total cost for the new positions beginning February 2014 is \$427,452. We will receive 50% of the funding from the federal government. The net county cost will be \$213,726 for the remainder of this fiscal year.	
Alternatives Maintaining current staffing levels with the certainty of not meeting state and federal standards for processing/maintaining public assistance caseloads.	
Action recommended: Allocate funding for twelve (12) additional IMC II positions and five (5) additional IMS II positions beginning February 1, 2014 for a cost of \$427,452. The net county cost is \$213,726.	