

Scotland County of Social Services Board
March 20, 2025
Regular Meeting

The vision of the Scotland County Social Services Board is to foster individual responsibility and to create a strong cooperative community that is responsive to the needs of its citizens.

DSS Board Members Present: Dorothy Tyson, Andy Kurtzman, Amanda Holland

DSS Staff Present: Kimberly McRae, Jessica Buehler, Joy Hine, Shannon Hammonds, Shaneall Kollock

DSS Board Members Absent: Darwin Williams, Mollie Flowers

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m. by Dorothy Tyson. Amanda Holland led the opening prayer.

A motion to approve the March 20, 2025 meeting agenda was made by Amanda Holland and seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The Board unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

Open Forum

- None

A motion to approve the January 16, 2025 meeting minutes was made by Andy Kurtzman and seconded by Amanda Holland. The Board unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

Director McRae gave the administrative report.

Please see the attached report.

Discussion from the administrative report:

Personnel:

Director McRae informed the Board that while positions are not classified as frozen at this time, a hold has been placed on posting some positions.

Children Services:

Mrs. Hammonds discussed that additions to current social workers caseloads, due to vacant positions, may affect the goal to have documentation current within seven days.

Scotland County Area Transit System:

Mr. Kurtzman and Mrs. Hine briefly discussed the lifting capabilities of each transit bus. Mrs. Hine stated that 5 of the transit buses are lift equipped. Mrs. Hine informed Mr. Kurtzman that the lifts are used daily. Lastly, Director McRae informed the Board that SCATS hopes to have their new transit bus by the end of the month. The bus will be delivered to SCATS.

Additional Conversation:

Mrs. Tyson asked Mrs. Hammonds and Director McRae to inform the Board of the current status of partnering with Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in terms of the Opiate Outreach Program. Director McRae stated that if EMS responds to a call that is opiate related, information will be given to the person they are responding to. Mrs. Hammonds stated that the goal is to get the information to the person at that moment. Mrs. Hammonds informed the Board that once a release of information has been signed, EMS is able to share the person's information. Mrs. Hammonds and the Opiate Outreach Program social worker, Nahava Chavis, met with EMS to discuss the protocol about sending over a referral for the Opiate Outreach Program. Mrs. Hammonds stated that the referral forms are now located on all ambulances. The Opiate Outreach Program has not currently received a referral from EMS. Mrs. Hammonds stated that this is due to the decline in opiate related emergency calls, per the Director of EMS, Robert Sampson. However, Mrs. Hammonds informed the Board that referrals are being received from the community, which means that the community is aware of the program. Mr. Kurtzman inquired about who is able to make a referral to the Opiate Outreach Program. Mrs. Hammonds stated that anyone is able to refer someone to the Opiate Outreach Program.

Mrs. Tyson asked for an update related to Narcan training for social workers, Mrs. Hammonds informed the board that Director Robert Sampson has discussed setting up social workers with kits that can be taken out in the field with them so they have access to Narcan in case of an emergency. Director McRae stated that training will take place once Director Sampson's schedule allows. Mrs. Hammonds discussed that one social worker was potentially exposed and was taken to the hospital. This encounter fueled the need for all social workers, not just the Opiate Outreach Program social worker, to be trained in administering Narcan as well.

Mrs. Tyson briefly discussed the legality of the SCATS transit driver filling in as the dispatcher. Director McRae stated that it was determined that since this fell under the "other duties as assigned" portion of the transit driver job description, extra pay was not necessary as this was a temporary solution. Mrs. Hine stated that the current SCATS transit driver filling in as the dispatcher has 30 years of experience in the school system as a bus driver and dispatcher. Mrs. Tyson inquired about the interest that the current dispatcher may have in applying for the position on a full time basis. Mrs. Hine stated that she felt the current dispatcher is interested in applying for the full time dispatcher position.

Mr. Kurtzman asked if it would be possible to use the current housing solutions in the Reentry Program for the Opiate Outreach Program as well. Mrs. Hammonds stated that it would be possible, if the Opiate Outreach Program had additional funding. Mrs. Hammonds discussed that several Opiate Outreach Program participants have been homeless and that creates an additional barrier for the social worker as the participant is hard to find. Mrs. Hammonds stated that Church Community Services helps with housing needs for three days, which allows for the social worker and the participant to start the process when housing is a need. Mrs. Hammonds stated that although the program does help with employment needs as well, that can be another obstacle if stable housing is not accessible for the participant.

Mrs. Holland inquired about any trends that have been identified in terms of social worker turnover. Director McRae and Mrs. Hammonds discussed that usually salary is the determining factor as many can get some experience here and then go to another county and make \$10,000 more immediately. The Board discussed potential agreements or incentives for social workers to remain at Scotland County such as reimbursement on training from the receiving county if a social worker goes to that county before a certain amount of time has passed. Director McRae also stated that some counties have a sign-on bonus for social workers, but if they leave within a certain amount of time, the sign-on bonus has to be paid back. Mrs. Hammonds discussed the most recent pool of social worker applicants and stated that two have had pre-service. Mrs. Hammonds stated that if they accept the job offer, those social workers would be able to come in the door and receive a caseload, which will alleviate some stress on the social work side.

Mrs. Holland inquired about the repeat maltreatment as a state measure for children services. Mrs. Hammonds explained that the measurement is taken over the course of three years. Although the Department has seen a decrease in repeat maltreatment, the overall percentage decreases slowly due to the three year timeframe. Mrs. Hammonds stated that the unit has seen a consistent decrease in which the percentage has decreased from 18% to 15%.

Mrs. Holland informed those present of the career fair that will be hosted by the University of North Carolina at Pembroke in April. Also, on May 2, 2025 a Bachelor's of Social Work expedition will be held on the campus, per Mrs. Holland.

A motion to approve the administrative report was made by Andy Kurtzman and seconded by Amanda Holland. The Board agreed and the motion passed.

Unfinished Business

- None

New Business

- FY 25 Agency Fraud Plan

The Board briefly discussed the FY 25 Agency Fraud Plan. Mrs. Kollock informed the Board that no changes were made, outside of the date, since the last approval. Mrs. Kollock informed the Board that the plan is created primarily at the State level to include policy. Mrs. Hine stated that the Department does get to determine the amount of fraud committed before a case is brought to court and when a case is to be prosecuted. Mr. Kurtzman inquired about the plan and how it currently works for the Department. Director McRae stated that the plan currently worked well.

A motion to approve the FY 25 Agency Fraud Plan as written was made by Amanda Holland and Seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The Board agreed and the motion passed.

- FY 25 Strategic Plan Review

Mr. Kurtzman asked Director McRae about areas that the Board should zoom in on in terms of the strategic plan. Director McRae stated that the Department is currently zooming in on retention, even though it has been better thus far in FY 25 than it was in FY 24. Mr. Kurtzman then inquired about additional measures discussed in the strategic plan. Director McRae discussed the goal of increasing foster care reimbursement through a finance and program reconciliation process. Next, Mrs. Hine discussed the goal of analyzing the cost per each SCATS trip. Mr. Kurtzman inquired about knowing when SCATS had to reach into local funding more than the external funding. Mrs. Hine stated that it benefits SCATS to know what is being spent on trips, gas, administrative staff, transit drivers, and overhead for supplies, among other things. Mrs. Hine discussed the difficulties of this measure as many different measures are needed to analyze this effectively. Director McRae and Mrs. Hine stated that the specific goal for SCATS may be removed in the next fiscal year.

- Consolidation of Health and Social Services Departments Discussion

Mrs. Tyson asked that this discussion be held at the next meeting, which will be held on April 17, 2025.

A motion to adjourn was made by Amanda Holland and seconded by Andy Kurtzman. The Board agreed and the meeting was adjourned.

Jessica Buehler, Board Clerk

Dorothy B. Tyson, Board Chair

Administrative Report
January 2025

Budget and Finance:

- The FY 25 DSS revised budget amount is \$9,169,041. The FY 25 SCATS revised budget amount is \$828,377 requiring an approximate 20% match in county funding. The Reentry budget, which began on December 1st, is approximately \$155,000. Spending through January 2024 is as follows:
 - DSS 51.68%
 - Reentry 12.82%
 - SCATS 32.21%
- Increase foster care reimbursement through a joint finance/program reconciliation process. (Strategic Plan)
- Create a user guide for finance staff and finance processes. (Strategic Plan)

Personnel Services

- The Department has fourteen vacancies, One Social Work Supervisor III, one IM Supervisor II, one Leadworker IMC III, two IMC II's, two IMC I's, two SWIAT's, one Social Worker III, one Vehicle Operator II, two Child Support Agent II's, one Community Social Services Technician.
- The FY 25 turnover rate is 11% for the agency.

Child Support

- As of the end of January, the unit continues to perform exceptionally well in meeting Self-assessment goals. The unit surpasses the goal in all Self-assessment areas and performs higher than the state average in seven of the eight measures.
- The unit has 96.12% of its 3,251 cases under an order, well above the goal of 90%.
- The unit's overall rate for Show Causes issued on cases when no payment is made within the first 90 days of establishing the Order is 80% (July-January).
- As of the end of January, the unit has collected over \$2.9 million of support for the families it serves.

Economic Services:

Child Care

- The Daycare unit currently serves 564 children. This number fluctuates each month based on the attendance reported by the daycare. Children are attending 19 daycares in Scotland County and 34 daycares outside Scotland County.
- There are currently 123 clients on the waiting list.
- During FY 25 the Daycare unit's combined spending coefficient is 96%.
- The Daycare unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. (Strategic Plan)

Food and Nutrition

- The FNS unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. (Strategic Plan)
- The unit strives for a same day processing goal of 25% for expedited applications and

a 18 day average for non expedited applications. During the month of January, the expedited applications were at 71% and non-expedited applications were at an average of 10 days. (Strategic Plan)

- In January, FNS received 531 recertifications with 97% timeliness. For February, 618 recertifications are expected.

Medicaid

- The Medicaid units are meeting the MOU goals for application timeliness. (Strategic Plan)

- For January, there were no SAA Applications and 1-SAD Application with 100%. (Strategic Plan)

- Medicaid's Timeliness Report Card for January was 98%.

- The NC Medicaid Expansion Dashboard for Scotland County was last updated January 3, 2024. The dashboard reports Scotland County having 3,298 enrolled in the Medicaid Expansion Program.

Work First Family Assistance/ Work First Employment

- The Work First Family Assistance unit is meeting MOU goals consistently for timeliness. As of January, we have a caseload of 78. (Strategic Plan)

- The Work First Employment caseload size as of January is 7 participants.

Program Integrity

- 100% of cases continued to be investigated timely.

Social Work Services:

Adult Services

- The unit continued to meet all MOU requirements during the fiscal year, The MAC coding for January, 2025 was 48%.

Children Services

- The children services unit works to increase retention across the unit which has been a statewide issue (Strategic Plan). For the month of January, the unit had 4 vacant positions, a SWS III, 2 SWIAT and FC SW III. The position for SW III was offered and not accepted and the position had to be reposted. The IAT position was reposted as well. However, interviews were completed, and one offer was accepted and one declined due to pay. The Department also had an additional resignation of an IAT at the end of January, so

that position will need to be posted, as there were no more candidates in the current pool.

- For all children who were victims of maltreatment, no more than 9.1% receive a subsequent finding of maltreatment. As of January, 2025 repeat maltreatment was 15%. (Strategic Plan, MOU measure)

- All social work documentation will be current within seven days. (Strategic Plan)

Program Managers and Supervisors in the Children's Services Unit continue to meet monthly to assess and track documentation to ensure it remains current. Workers have been afforded protected time to work from home on documentation since they have had chromebooks returned to them, and this seems to be working well. The unit continues to work diligently to increase timeliness with documentation.

- Increase the number of licensed foster homes by 25%. As of December, 2025 there

are 9 licensed foster homes in Scotland County. The fall MAPP class was completed on 1/21/25. There were 5 families that completed the class. The goal is to have these homes licensed by the end of June, 2025. (Strategic Plan).

DPS Reentry Program

- For the month of January, the Reentry Program had 20 active participants, and 6 new referrals.
- The Reentry Program had a Donation Drive scheduled for January, however it had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. The Department is working to get it rescheduled.
- The Program began Reentry Focused Days in the community in January and it was a success. These will occur monthly at the courthouse.
- The Reentry Program staff are currently in the process of obtaining an MOA with B.E.S.T. Motivational and Coaching Services.
- The Reentry Program staff are currently in the process of obtaining an MOA with Golden Life Solutions as a housing partner.
- Funding still remains a great challenge for the reentry program. The Administrator did apply for a grant through SECU, but was denied due to it only assisting 501-c(3) agencies. The Administrator has also reached out to the Bob Barker Foundation and Walmart in an effort to get grants. The Reentry program staff are also looking to plan some fundraising events in an effort to raise funds to continue the program.

Scotland County Opioid Outreach Program

- For the month of January, the OOP had 3 new referrals, and 1 active participant.
- The OOP social worker and supervisor attended a meeting with EMS staff to discuss the program and referral process, and has gone live in being able to receive referrals from EMS staff. The program has not received any referrals to date.
- The OOP social worker met with Health Department staff to discuss the program in January and explain the referral process. The program is open to receiving referrals from the health department as well.
- The OOP social worker has coordinated with the health department's director to set up a table one Thursday per month in the health department to advertise the program. She will also continue setting up a table monthly in the DSS lobby as well. We have also discussed community outreach by setting up an informational table at

the courthouse, and other central spots within the community.

- Since beginning the program, we are noting that additional needs are essential for participants, such as housing. The OOP is working in conjunction with the DSS director to try and secure additional funding so that these essential needs may be assisted on a temporary basis.

Scotland County Family Treatment Court

- The Scotland County FTC program now has a coordinator in place, as of October 2024.
- The Scotland County FTC will hold its first official session February 7, 2025.

They have one active client, and have been sent several referrals that may be candidates for the program. They prefer to begin with 3 participants so that they can ensure the program is running smoothly and as it should.

Scotland Area Transit System (SCATS)

- The agency continues to analyze and determine the cost per each SCATS trip. (Strategic Plan)
- SCATS trips increased in January, following a slight decline over the holiday months.
- SCATS continues to have one bus off the road due to damage.

Other Impacts on DSS:

- The Scotland County Board of Commissioners approved DSS Agency Closed Dates as follows: March 14, 2025; June 6, 2025; September 19, 2025 and December 10, 2025 (ATeam sponsored Christmas Luncheon).
- Funds for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) began on December 1, 2024 to a limited population and was opened to the public on January 1, 2025. The funding has now been depleted although we continue to accept applications. Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) funding is still available for heating related crisis.

Common Acronyms

ADA - American with Disabilities Act

APS - Adult Protective Services

CPS - Child Protective Services

COVID - 19 - Coronavirus

DCDEE - Department of Child Development and Early Education (Daycare)

DHB - Department of Health Benefits (Medicaid)

DHHS - Department of Health and Human Services

FNS - Food and Nutrition Services

FTC- Family Treatment Court

IT - Information Technology

LIHEAP - Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program

LIHWAP - Low Income Housing Water Assistance Program

LBL - Local Business Liaison

MAC - Medicaid Administrative Claiming (funding source)

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

OHSR - Office of Human State Resources

OST - Operational Support Team

OOP- Outreach Opioid Program

REDA - Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit

SCATS - Scotland County Area Transit System

SSBG - Social Services Block Grant (funding source)

SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SWAP - Scotland Wellness Assistance Program

PHE - Public Health Emergency

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

PSNAP - Pandemic Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

WFFA - Work First Family Assistance