

### **Work First Benefits (WFB)**

Effective October 1, 2009, the Work First program implemented a new process for issuing Work First cash assistance. This process is called Work First Benefits (WFB). All adults who are included in the assistance payment must have a Mutual Responsibility Plan of Action agreement that requires the individuals to work or participate in work-related activities. These adults must complete all of the requirements on their agreement each month before receiving Work First cash assistance, unless there is a good cause.

Work First Benefits mirrors the working world, where individuals “work first” and receive payment for employment afterwards. Work First Benefits was piloted in six (6) counties in which they were successful in improving North Carolina’s Work First participation rate. Work First participation rates are required by federal standards and can affect funding for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

The North Carolina Division of Social Services worked with various agencies for more than a year to assist counties in preparing for the implementation of WFB. Work First will continue to practice family centered principles to ensure that services are provided to families in need.