



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

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President

August 28, 2008

Memorandum

To: Select HRD Coordinators/Directors
Career Start Case Managers

From: Diane Steinbeiser and Jan Hastings
Career Start Program Coordinators

Subject: Career Start Policy Update
Information Highway Teleconference

New Career Start procedures were reviewed during the June 11, 2008, Career Start Policy Update Information Highway Teleconference. These policies are effective July 1, 2008 and will be reflected in the revised Career Start Operational Guidelines to be distributed in October 2008.

Attached you will find the document addressing the questions and answers that were discussed during that teleconference. Please contact your Career Start coordinator if you wish additional clarification.

DS

c: Select Presidents
Select Senior Continuing Education Administrators

S08-058
Email Copy



Career Start Policy Updates
Information Highway Teleconference
June 11, 2008

Questions and Answers

1. Why are we vouchering the participant for not completing the program? Why are we awarding non-compliance? Where is the accountability?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which funds the NC Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) program, mandates that participants are reimbursed for any expenses for participating in Employment and Training (E&T) programs.

2. How do we get interpreters?

Contact your local Division of Social Services (DSS) case worker to see if they can provide an interpreter or allow the college to utilize DSS's interpreter services for the client. One can also work with the ESL department at the college. We encourage each school to have an abbreviated orientation ready for these individuals. College staff may want to review information at www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/lep/index.htm for a clearer understanding of this USDA federal requirement for FNS recipients. Additional assistance may be found at <http://telelanguage.com>

3. If FNS participants receive a voucher for each 4 weeks of training and or combination of training and Employment Security Commission (ESC) job search activity, what constitutes a week of activity for vouchering purposes?

Three or more hours constitutes a week for vouchering purposes. For clients who complete an Orientation/Interview, Resume and Application (IRA) and choose job search, the community college will send proof of attendance dates and hours to ESC in addition to the Transmittal Career Start Form 2625 and the Education

Development Plan Career Start Form 2623A for every client who moves forward with the job search component.

For clients who complete an Orientation/IRA and choose the education component for an additional 3 weeks, the community college sends proof of attendance dates and hours and the Voucher Form 2628 to DSS.

4. Does the participant have to wait the entire four weeks for vouchering?

DSS, not the community college, determines reimbursement. The community college will send proof of attendance dates and hours along with Form 2628 to DSS when:

- Participant attends any portion of Orientation/IRA (even if not complete) when NOT moving forward with an education component or when NOT moving forward to ESC for job search.
- After completing 4 weeks of Career Start at the community college (which can be any combination of Orientation/IRA Workshop, education placement activities such as HRD courses, Basic Skills courses, WorkKeys Labs, Con Ed. classes, etc.).

5. Can a participant be reimbursed for partial participation?

Yes, DSS may reimburse participants for partial participation. **DSS, not the community college, determines reimbursement.** The community college documents attendance dates and hours in the Career Start Orientation/IRA and education placement activities. This is then forwarded with the Voucher Form 2628 to whichever agency (ESC or DSS) as appropriate.

- Proof of attendance is sent directly to ESC when any combination of Orientation/IRA and / or educational component activities is fewer than 4 weeks. ESC will send the 2628 Voucher Form to DSS.

6. Will there be fewer referrals now since the FNS participant determines if the DSS reimbursement fee is sufficient to cover costs of attendance?

Yes, community colleges will be receiving fewer referrals due to adherence to these new guidelines. That is why Career Start marketing will need to play a pivotal role in program planning.

7. Is there a change in policy if you are under the 20 hours per week Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) waiver?

There is no change in policy regarding ABAWD hours in counties under the ABAWD waiver.

ABAWDs in non-waivered counties will be required to participate 20 hours per week. Please refer to the top of DSS-2624 (revised 04/08) for DSS caseworker notes listing of ABAWD needs_____ hours/week. If no notation is made, FNS participant needs 20 hours per week. For questions regarding waived and non-waived counties contact your local DSS.

8. Are volunteers vouchered if they do not have a 2624 and they were brought into the Career Start program through marketing?

No. Volunteers brought into Career Start from the community through marketing will not be vouchered, nor will they be reported on your Monthly Report. These volunteers, however, may be eligible for FNS benefits and we encourage Career Start staff to make referrals to DSS when appropriate.

9. Are volunteers counted in the monthly report if they do not have a 2624?

No. See number 8 above.

10. Is the default participation requirement in the education component 12 hours per week if you are in an ABAWD waiver county?

No. All clients participating in the employment and training program are required to complete 3 or more hours per week.

11. How will the community college inform DSS if a participant needs vouchering if ESC normally handles the vouchering paperwork?

This depends on the length of your Orientation/IRA and the weeks completed in Career Start. Please see number 4 above.

12. Do you start counting the 20 hours when the participant shows up for the first day of orientation?

Yes

13. Can a participant get a second voucher if they request a cure? Will the participant receive a voucher each time they return?

The process for curing non-compliance has not changed. When a participant is sent back to the community college for a cure, the community college will verify

compliance on CS 2625 to DSS, complete with verification of dates and hours of attendance. Please see number 4 above.

Note: DSS issues reimbursement based on verification of attendance dates and hours sent from the community college or ESC. The community college only verifies hours of participation in Orientation/IRA and education placement activities; not eligibility for reimbursement. **DSS determines who gets reimbursed and when that reimbursement is issued; not the community college.**

14. Can the Career Start budget be revised after July 1, 2008?

Revisions can be made within line items with permission from the State Office throughout the year. However, schools that wish to revise the total amount received for the 2008-2009 budget year need to have their revised budgets to the System Office no later than July 1, 2008.

15. How do you budget when no one knows how many referrals we will be receiving?

By looking at the referral numbers for the 2007-2008 year, colleges can estimate how many ABAWDs may be referred in the 2008-2009 year. Please note that these numbers will not reflect the actual number of ABAWDs who attended the Orientation/IRA s. On average, 34% of all referrals received across the state actually attend orientations. Please keep this in mind as you make your calculations.

Another way to estimate the potential number of referrals is to:

- Use the Career Start Outcome Analysis information supplied to the System Office in May to see who attended Orientations;
- Review the 2624 in participant folders of those who attended and note the number of ABAWDs;
- Average the number of ABAWDs across the time period researched. This will yield the maximum number of ABAWD referrals to expect from DSS.

16. Have volunteers been redefined?

No. There are two types of volunteers:

1. Volunteers who are referred to Career Start on the 2624 from DSS and are counted on all Career Start paperwork: i.e. for vouchering purposes and on Monthly Reports.
2. Community volunteers who are brought into the program because they could benefit from the Orientation/IRA. They may have come to Career Start through marketing efforts or by giving a required FNS participant a ride. They have

registered for the class as a regular HRD student and earn FTE. They are not vouchered and are **currently not** reported on the Monthly Report, however tracking these community volunteers is recommended and may become a part of the Monthly Report in the near future.

17. Will the clients have a choice whether or not to participate in the Career Start program after July 1, 2008?

No, they don't. DSS case workers determine eligibility and referral requirements for Career Start participation. FNS participants do not make that choice; Both the DSS case worker and the FNS participant determine if a good cause reason pertains to the participant's situation.

18. Can the participant reschedule?

Yes, participants may reschedule as many times as needed, provided that good cause is established and documented on the History of Action (HOA Form 2631).

19. What are the correct numbered memos the community college Career Start case managers should be referring to for the current policy changes?

Please see Numbered Memos SO8-007 and SO8-034. You should have received these electronically. You may access them at www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Numbered_Memos/index.html.

20. Can't we require FNS Career Start participants to participate 40 hours per week like the Work First participants?

No. Work First is an entirely different program.

21. Does the process start over if there is a break in the participant's certification?

Community colleges do not determine FNS certification periods. Follow established procedures for processing 2624s and 2625s.

22. Can volunteers be reimbursed?

Only those who were referred to Career Start via DSS-2624 will have voucher paperwork forwarded to DSS or ESC. The community college does not reimburse for participation. **DSS, not the community college, makes this**

determination for reimbursement. The community college documents the dates and hours of attendance and sends this forward.

23. How do these policies take effect on July 1, 2008?

This policy is effective with individuals you see or who begin participation on or after July 1, 2008 regardless to when you received the 2624.

24. Are ABAWDs subject to noncompliance?

Yes.