



North Carolina Benefits Counseling Services (NCBCS) Demonstration Project Year 1

7/1/2020 – 6/30/2021

<p>System Gap Addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects demonstrates that individuals who receive benefits counseling services are more likely to pursue employment, maintain employment, and leverage available incentives that support their goal of greater financial security and independence. • The North Carolina Benefits Counseling Services Demonstration Project initiative will attempt to demonstrate the impact of using a tiered model to address the lack of system capacity for providing benefits counseling services to individuals receiving federal and state public assistance.
<p>Initiative Goals and Timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand benefits counseling services throughout the state by increasing capacity through the training of employment service staff as benefits liaisons to collect basic information and provide general benefits information and referrals • Increase employment participation through provision of Information and Referral, initial benefits counseling advisement, benefits service plans and on-going support. • Train 50 individuals or families (first year) through partner agencies • Development of Referral network • Development of Benefits Liaison training curriculum
<p>Description of Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year One will include the following activities: • Deliver training to agencies • Development of a referral network • Gathering and analyzing outcome data and success stories
<p>Achievements and Outcomes to Date</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained 5 agencies • Trained 24 staff members • Developed 7 MOUs with new referral network partners • Gathering feedback from agencies about their experience after the training • Survey development to track services and outcomes • Benefits Liaison training underway • Creation of information and referral resource list • Implemented Benefits Counseling plan as a tool to track services
<p>Expected System Change as Result</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the availability of benefits counseling services for individuals receiving public benefits that are currently working, those who have extended a job offer, transitioning youth and their families, and those interested in self-employment.