



Forsyth County Department of Social Services

Frequently Asked Questions



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How do I check my mail (P.O Box 999)?

Customers that utilize P.O. Box 999 will be able to pick up their mail each day between the hours of 8:30AM-9:30AM, through the main entrance to the building. We ask that you call before you come to check to see if you have mail. You may reach someone who can check on your mail at: **(336)703-3998** (Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM).

Have a new mailing address or an address where you may temporarily receive mail? Please update your address by calling your caseworker or (336) 703-3800.

I have experienced a recent significant change to my financial situation, where can I go for help?

- **Assistance Through DSS-**

[To Apply for Food and Nutrition Services \(FNS\) Assistance](#)

[To Apply for Medicaid or Health Choice](#)

[To Apply for Work First Family Assistance \(WFFA\)](#)

[To Apply for Assistance with your Utility Bills](#)

- **Community Financial Assistance Programs-** *Please note that you should **call before you go** as many agencies have modified their processes for screening applicants due to COVID-19*

[Crisis Control Ministry](#) - Emergency assistance is available to residents of Forsyth County who have a crisis and need rent/mortgage, utilities, food, or medication assistance. To get a list of program requirements call **(336) 724-7453** Winston-Salem location / **(336) 996-5401** Kernersville Location

[Salvation Army](#) - Assistance with Emergency Financial Assistance, Food, Clothing, Furniture, and Transportation. To get a list of program requirements call **(336) 722-9597**.

[Sunnyside Ministry](#) - Assistance with food, clothing and financial assistance. They ask that you call **336-724-7558** before you come to their office.

[Winston-Salem Rescue Mission Pantry & Shelter](#) - Assistance with Food, Clothing, and Shelter services. Call **(336) 723-1848** for additional information.

- **Other Relief Programs -**

[Forsyth County Helping Agencies](#)

[Forsyth County Food Pantries](#)

[Where to Find Financial Relief During Coronavirus](#)

- **File for Unemployment Benefits**

Contact the [North Carolina Division of Employment Security](#) to apply for unemployment benefits as soon as you experience a job loss or reduction in hours because if you are approved, payment will be made back to the date of your application.

There are multiple programs funding unemployment benefits right now, meaning you may be eligible for benefits even if you are an independent contractor or have experienced a reduction in hours or pay due to Coronavirus. DES intends to implement the programs in the following order:

1. **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC):** This program provides an additional \$600 in weekly unemployment insurance benefits to eligible claimants. We are currently testing our system for this program and anticipate making the first payments by **April 17, 2020**.

2. **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA):** This program provides unemployment compensation for individuals not eligible for regular unemployment insurance or any extensions to unemployment insurance. This will provide benefits to eligible self-employed workers and independent contractors. We anticipate the system will be ready to accept claims for this assistance around **April 25, 2020**.
3. **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC):** This program provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits for those who have exhausted their state unemployment benefits. A definitive timeline for completing system updates for this program is not yet available.

Many of their previous requirements have changed during this pandemic. **Here is the process:**

1. **Create an account and File Your Claim Online ([Click Here](#))**
 - If you are filing due to COVID-19, select “Coronavirus” as your reason for Separation
 - *If you don't have access to a computer or need assistance, you may file over the phone by calling the Customer Call Center at 888-737-0259. However, due to the high volume of calls related to COVID-19, you may experience a long wait time.*
2. **Complete your Certification Every Week**
 - **This MUST be done *each week* to receive your unemployment payment**
 - TIP: N.C. Executive Order 118 allows some requirements to be waived for people filing for unemployment due to COVID-19. If you are filing due to COVID-19, you may answer ‘yes’ to this question on the Weekly Certification: Did you look for work?
 - If you are temporarily out of work due to COVID-19, please select **Lay off: Lack of work due to Coronavirus**.
 - If you are working reduced hours due to COVID-19, please select **Still Employed: Reduction of Hours due to Coronavirus**.
3. **There will likely be a 14-day hold before you receive payment (Keep filing weekly!)**
 - After you file your claim, your last employer will be given, by law, 10 days to respond to DES. No payment will be released until after this 10-day period. If there are no issues, individuals typically receive payment within about 14 days of filing their initial claim.
 - **TIP: Remember—you must complete a Weekly Certification for each week, or you will not receive payment.**

- **Explore Assistance Available to Small Businesses and Independent Contractors**

The [U.S. Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#) has resources available to small businesses who have experienced an economic disruption due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The CARES Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020, which contains relief money to support American workers and small businesses. [Click Here to Read About the Relief Programs They Offer](#)

How do I Apply for Food & Nutrition Service (food stamps)?

All Food and Nutrition Services Applicants can apply through the following ways:

- On-line at epass.nc.gov. If you apply online, you may be able to upload the verifications we need to this system;
- You may print your own paper application online [Application for Food and Nutrition Services](#) and drop it off or mail it to us at 741 Highland Avenue, Winston-Salem, NC 27101;
- You may pick up or drop off a paper application if you visit the glassed-in foyer of our office, Monday to Friday 8AM-5PM; and
- By calling our office at **(336)703-3800** and leaving a message with our call center for an applications caseworker to follow-up with you within 1 business day.

How do I Apply for Medicaid/Health Choice for myself and my children?

All Medicaid Applicants can apply through the following ways:

- On-line at epass.nc.gov. If you apply online, you may be able to upload the verifications we need to this system;
- You may print your own paper application online [Medicaid and Health Choice Paper Applications](#) and mail it to us at 741 Highland Avenue, Winston-Salem, NC 27101;
- You may pick up or drop off a paper application if you visit the glassed-in foyer of our office, Monday to Friday 8AM-5PM; and
- By calling our office at **(336)703-3800** and leaving a message with our call center for an applications caseworker to follow-up with you within 1 business day.

How do I Apply for Work First Benefits?

We strongly suggest that you speak to a caseworker before applying to make sure that you have the correct forms to complete as this program can have a lengthy application. You may speak to someone Monday-Friday from 8AM-5PM by calling 336-703-3410 or by emailing us at workfirstea-user@forsyth.cc. Applications for Work First Family Assistance (WFFA) benefits are also available for pick-up from our office. You may drop off the completed application or mail it to:

**741 Highland Avenue
Winston-Salem, NC 27101**

You may call with any questions about Work First and speak with a caseworker at **(336)703-3410**. You may utilize our email address for any correspondence: WorkFirstEA-user@forsyth.cc

How can I apply for Assistance with my bills?

The Department of Social Services has multiple programs available for assistance with basic utility bills. We are able to take an application from you over the phone.

- For assistance with essential utility bill assistance through the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP), please contact [\(336\)703-3800, option 4.](tel:3367033800)
- If you are a family with children in the home, please contact (336) 703-3410 to apply for Emergency Assistance for utility bills. If they are unable to help you, then you may apply for Crisis Intervention Program assistance (see below)

How do I Report a Change? (address, employment status, or another change)

If you already have active Medicaid, Medicaid Transportation or Food and Nutrition Services and you need to report a change, submit documentation, or have questions concerning your active case, you may:

- Call us at [\(336\)703-3800](tel:3367033800)
- Send an email to customercare-user@forsyth.cc
- Send a fax to [\(336\)727-2842](tel:3367272842)

How do I Make a Fee Payment to DSS?

Until further notice, individuals who are required to pay an enrollment fee for NC Health Choice and/or premium for Healthcare for the Working Disabled will be exempt from this requirement. This is being explored for other programs and information will be shared as soon as we receive it. If you have any questions, please call us at [\(336\)703-3800](tel:3367033800).

To make a payment for Child Support Applications and/or Program Integrity (Fraud), you may either mail it to us or drop it off in the locked mailbox in our front foyer area. Please make sure to enclose your money order, certified check, or personal check with any copies of correspondence in your envelope. Our address is:

**741 Highland Avenue
Winston-Salem, NC 27101**

We will mail you a receipt within 2 business days. If you have any questions, please call us at [**\(336\)703-3422**](tel:3367033422).

How can I find out about my Child Support Case?

All Child Support customers may call [**\(800\)992-9457**](tel:8009929457) for case-related information, status of court cases, update case information, and give information. Customers may also call [**\(336\)703-3801**](tel:3367033801) for case information, court information, update the case, and to have a message sent to their caseworker. For more details about Child Support Services in Forsyth County please click [Here](#).

For Online Services such as: to access case information, apply for Child Support, and access resources connect with us at: [**ncchildsupport.com**](http://ncchildsupport.com).

I am concerned about a child in Forsyth County, how can I file a protective services report?

Child Protective Services (CPS) - Our CPS Intake hotline is available 24-hours per day, 7 days per week. If you suspect abuse or neglect, please contact our intake hotline at [**\(336\) 703-ABUSE**](tel:336703ABUSE) or [**\(336\)703-2287**](tel:3367032287).

I am concerned about an adult in Forsyth County, how can I file a protective services report and/or facility complaint?

Adult Protective Services - To report instances of abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults 18 years of age and older, please call [**\(336\)703-3503**](tel:3367033503). Adult Care Facility Complaints - Please call [**\(336\)703-3501**](tel:3367033501) to make any complaints regarding Assisted Living Facilities.

I have heard there is more Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) assistance available due to the COVID-19 pandemic, can you tell me about this?

All families that receive FNS will receive the maximum amount allowed for March 2020 and April 2020 for their household size. For example, a family of four would be eligible to receive a total of \$646 for

each of the two months no matter what their usual amount is. The increase is subject to the following guidelines:

- Households that have already received the maximum amount for their household size will not receive the temporary increase.
- The household size will not include ineligible or disqualified members.
- Households that were ineligible in either March 2020 or April 2020 will not receive a temporary increase for the month(s) they were ineligible.
- Households that were eligible for an allotment but either month prorated to \$0 will receive a supplement for the prorated month.
- If a household had a prior overpayment that was being recouped during March or April, that will not affect the supplement amount.

Households will begin receiving the temporary increased benefit on their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card as early as April 1 for March and beginning April 22 for April. They will be randomly generated and staggered every other workday until all eligible households have received their temporary increase.

Recipients will continue to receive their regular benefits and should be aware they will receive two separate payments for March and two for April.

To check availability of benefits families should:

- Call **(888)622-7328**.
- Visit www.ebtedge.com. Click on More Information under EBT Cardholders.
- Download the **ebtEDGE mobile app**. The app is available as a free download on the Apple Store and Google Play.

What do I need to know if my Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) certification period ends between March 31 and April 30, 2020?

To help limit the spread of COVID-19, NCDHHS has also received approval to extend FNS certification periods so that beneficiaries don't have to visit county Social Services offices to qualify for continued services. ***Certification periods will be extended for all six- and 12-month cases that have a certification period ending between March 31, 2020 and April 30, 2020.***

- Cases with six-month certification periods will be extended for six months.
- Cases with 12-month certification periods will be extended 12 months.

- Individuals/families with cases ending on March 31, 2020 or April 30, 2020 will not need to submit a recertification until their next certification period has ended.
- Notices will be sent out to clients explaining the change.

Other waivers and potential program supplements are being explored at both the federal and state levels. Information will be provided as decisions are made.

What services are being temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19?

The following services are closed to the public until further notice:

- Onsite DNA testing
- Services through The Employment Lab
- Foster Parent Interest meetings & TIPPS/MAPP Foster Parent training classes
- Child Support Group Appointments
- Program Integrity In-person Interviews are canceled and participants will be contacted by phone or US Mail

What if the answer to my question is not here?

Please call us at [**\(336\)703-3800**](tel:3367033800) and we will be happy to answer any questions that you have!