



THE FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES HELD THEIR REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025, AT 9:30 A.M. AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTER, 1255 FRANKLIN ST. ROCKY MOUNT VA

THOSE PRESENT: Sharon Tudor, Chairperson, Rocky Mount District Representative  
Leslie Holden, Vice Chair, Blue Ridge District Representative  
Penny Guilliams, Blackwater District Representative  
Bill Gruchow, Union Hall District Representative  
Dave Thorp, Snow Creek District Representative  
Barry Ferguson, Boone District Representative  
Mike Carter, BOS Member

THOSE ABSENT: Vacant, Gills Creek District Representative

OTHERS PRESENT: Anita "Toni" Turner, Director  
Ashley Rutter, Assistant Director, Benefits Unit  
Jessica Davis, Assistant Director, Services Unit  
Kathy Walker, Administrative Coordinator II

**MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY SHARON TUDOR, BOARD CHAIR**

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Invocation was given by Sharon Tudor, Rocky Mount District Representative

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Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Gruchow, Union Hall District Representative

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**CONSENT AGENDA**

-Accounts Payable Listing & Approval of July 21, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes.

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**-SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR BENEFITS, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SERVICES STAFF**

Anita "Toni" Turner, Director, reports at this time, currently there are 7 vacancies. Services has 5 vacancies, Benefits has 1 vacancy, and Admin has 1 vacancy. It is recommended that we pay OT for any management approved Emergency work in the Services Division due to the 5 vacancies. In particular, the Foster Care unit currently has 3 of the 5 Services vacancies with all foster care workers taking on more work than normal to cover the vacancies. It is also recommended that we pay OT for any mandatory sitting with displaced youth in our agency that may occur in September 2025. The management staff will manage this overtime spending with payroll to keep a close watch on the expenditures.

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**SUBSTANCE USE SCREENING AND TESTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Anita "Toni" Turner reported that it came to our attention in a recent State training, the requirement for all Social Services localities to have a formal Substance Use Screening and Testing policy. The State does not mandate the process, only the requirement to screen and test when necessary. Up to this point, our process was not a formal written process. To meet State requirements, the process has been put formally in writing by the entirety of the services management team.

The services management team has been working with the Family Recovery Court liaison to create the Franklin County Substance Use Screening and Testing policy. After several meetings and rewrites, the policy attached is the final draft. This policy, once approved by the Board, will be sent to the State, utilized by staff and available to clients as an educational tool.



## Franklin County Department of Social Services—Substance Use Screening and Testing Policy and Procedures

*Our mission is to protect the vulnerable, promote self-sufficiency or maximum economic independence, and prevent negative social outcomes for the residents of Franklin County.*

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**PURPOSE:** THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS/CAREGIVERS ABOUT DRUG TESTING AND WHEN IT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE. DRUG TESTING IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH BUDGET LINE 830 OF THE PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES (PSSF) FUNDS AND AT TIMES COMPLETED BY A THIRD PARTY CONTRACTED VENDOR WITH A DRUG TESTING LABORATORY. PSSF FUNDS ARE ALLOCATED ANNUALLY BY THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (VDSS) TO SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS SUBSTANCE USE SERVICE NEEDS OF PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS/CAREGIVERS INVOLVED IN CHILD WELFARE.

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### Section I: Summary and purpose of policy and disclosures

- This document serves as an outline of the policy and procedures that Franklin County Department of Social Services staff will follow regarding substance use screening and testing protocols within the child welfare setting. According to VA Code (22 VAC 40-705-90-D); when a child protective services worker has reason to believe that the caretaker in a valid report of child abuse or neglect is using substances and such behavior may be related to the matter being investigated or assessed, the worker may request that person to consent to substance use screening or may petition the court to order such screening. Local departments of social services are directed by Virginia Code to develop guidelines around such screening and or d1; local departments must develop guidelines for such screening and or d2; guidelines may include child protective services worker administration of urine screening.

*Disclaimer: This document is an ever-changing document, and the department reserves the right to adjust and make changes, as the needs surrounding substance use change, based on state and federal policies as well as changes within vendors for laboratory drug testing and agency drug testing companies. Deviating outside of guidelines shall be approved by the agency and assistant director, on a case-by-case basis. This document is intended as a guide and circumstances are discretionary.*

### Section II: What constitutes substance use involved abuse and neglect?

- Any allegation where the alleged caretaker of a child(ren) is reported to have been using substances, has drug paraphernalia within the home, manufacturing or selling of illegal substances, or other visible characteristics indicative of substance use are



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present. Additionally, there could be recent positive drug screens with other local entities such as court and other risk factors are identified.

### Section III: Risk and protective factors to consider when screening and testing

<b>Risk Factors</b>	<b>Protective Factors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Did the initial allegation include concerns of substance use?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is there an alternative caregiver in the home who is protective</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is there collateral information from police or other agencies indicating substance use?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is the parent/caregiver currently receiving substance use treatment or drug testing?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is there a history of substance use by parent/caregiver</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is parent/caregiver taking medication for substance use (suboxone, methadone etc.)?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Are there signs of substance use in the home? (ie—drug paraphernalia such as spoons, needles)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is parent/caregiver receiving other services? (Mental health support, behavioral management, psychiatry, parent aid etc.)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Does the parent/caregiver have physical signs of substance use? (Poor hygiene, disheveled hair and body appearance, sores on face or body, dilated constricted pupils, needle marks in arms etc.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o What are the ages of the child(ren) in the home? Are they able to self-protect (school age and above)?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Does parent/caregiver have physical signs of withdrawal or drug use (agitation or euphoria, change in speech, mood, tremors or shaking?)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Is the parent/caregiver honest about substance use and shown willingness to cooperate with agency?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Are there allegations of criminal behavior within the home? (ie—reports from law enforcement)</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Was an infant in the home born substance exposed?</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Upon questioning did the parent/caregiver admit substance use?</li></ul>	



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### Section IV: Guidance on substance use screening and testing

- Drug tests alone cannot provide information on:
  - The severity of an individual's substance use.
  - The progress in recovery.
  - The effects on parenting capacity.
- Safety concerns must still be assessed by observing the home environment and caretaker's demeanor/ability to safely care for the child.
- Drug testing cannot prove child safety.
- Drug testing should not be the sole factor to:
  - Determine parent-child family time (visitation).
  - Make decisions about child removal, reunification, or termination of parental rights
  - Substantiate child abuse or neglect allegation in the absence of comprehensive investigation and family assessment.
- The differences between screening and testing are:
  - Screening refers to the process of gathering information which could include testing with the intent to identify a further need for a substance use evaluation
  - Testing refers to the actual collection of a specimen.
- Guidelines and practices must be impartial, applied consistently across all subpopulations and provide thorough guidance if variations exist.
- A urine drug test does not diagnose an individual with a substance use disorder and a behavioral assessment should be completed by a licensed professional.
- LDSS should have a shared goal of recovery for the parent(s)/legal guardian.
- LDSS employees should utilize a comprehensive approach to follow up with an evidence-based screening in collaboration with licensed substance use disorder treatment providers.

### Section V: Testing administration, types, frequency and locations

- Urine drug tests are conducted on a random basis, determined by the requirements of the service plan, any identified safety concerns and/or recommendations from the court.



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- All testing adheres to standard protocols to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the results. Results of the drug tests are recorded according to the LDSS guidance as stated on the urine test results form.
- Any positive results are thoroughly reviewed and addressed with the individual, and appropriate interventions are recommended as needed.
  - Should the court require additional information or documentation related to these drug screenings, the current family services specialist will be present in court to address any concerns related to the test administered and swear under oath the results are true and accurate.
- Redwood Toxicology is the company that Franklin County Department of Social Services purchases urine drug tests.
- Any other form of drug test will be completed by and at a third-party location.
- Only urine tests will be administered by family services specialists or human services assistants.
- Only one urine drug test will be administered by an LDSS employee within a 24-hour period.
  - If parent/legal guardian/caregiver disagrees with results, then they have the right to seek another test at their own expense.
    - Results from this test will be required to be given to the family services specialist and reviewed with assigned supervisor.
    - Risks to having more than one drug test within a 24-hour period will be explained to the parent/legal guardian/caretaker.
    - For these results to be considered valid, the results must be sent directly from the lab of their choosing with valid consent on file to the assigned family services specialist.
- If the current parent/legal guardian/caretaker should refuse a drug test, then the assigned family services specialists will factor in any identified risk and safety factors to determine the best course of action.
  - Should the LDSS make the decision that a drug test is warranted to measure substance use and test is still refused, then the parent/legal guardian/caregiver will be presumed positive for all substances and legal action may be needed.
  - A case staffing with assigned supervisor will take place.
- Family services specialists can have parent/legal guardian/caregiver complete both scheduled and unscheduled urine tests.



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- These tests can also be completed by a human services assistant at the direction of the assigned family services specialist/supervisor.
- **Chain of Command**
  - No urine test should be opened until family services specialist or human services assistant is with the parent/legal guardian/caregiver.
  - The urine test should be opened in the presence of the parent/legal guardian/caregiver and then disposed of by the parent/legal guardian/caregiver.
  - Results will be reviewed immediately with the client.
  - A second reviewer may be requested by the client.
  - Upon return to the LDSS, results will be reviewed with the assigned supervisor.
- Each urine drug test completed will have a timer set by the family services specialist/human services assistant for the recommended 3-to-5-minute window and all tests will be read within that window. Family services specialists or human services assistants will read the side panel first within one minute of the specimen being collected to ensure validity.
  - Following the completion and review of the urine test, results will be recorded on the drug test acknowledgment form. Pictures of the urine test may be taken by the appropriate parties.
- Results will be reviewed with the parent/legal guardian/caregiver, and they will be asked to sign drug test acknowledgement form.
  - If there is court involvement, the copy of the hair follicle or other lab results should be given to all involved attorneys within 72 hours.
  - A copy should be provided to the parent/legal guardian/caregiver.
  - A copy should be placed in the family's hard file and filed in Compass.
- **Drug Screening Children**
  - If there are allegations of substance use by a child (i.e. exposure by ingesting substances or court orders for child/youth to be drug tested), the LDSS reserves the right to request a drug test with at least one of the parents/legal guardian permission.
  - If a child is in LDSS custody, the LDSS assumes custody and the LDSS reserves the right to have the youth drug tested.



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### Section VI: Substance use testing and screening procedure for potential out of home placements

- Per VDSS policies, any potential caregivers and all adults residing in the home must complete a urine drug test to determine eligibility for out of home placement option.

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### **(RESOLUTION # 01-08-2025)**

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Franklin County Board of Social Services to approve the aforementioned Consent Agenda items, as presented.

MOTION BY: Dave Thorp

SECONDED BY: Barry Ferguson

VOTING ON THE MOTION WAS AS FOLLOWS:

AYES: Thorp, Ferguson, Holden, Carter, Guilliams, Gruchow and Tudor

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

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### **DEPARTMENT UPDATE: BENEFITS UNIT**

Jessica Shortt, Benefit Program Supervisor, provided an overview of the Energy Assistance Program.

Good morning, my name is Jessica Shortt and I have worked for DSS for 13 years this month.

I am going to discuss Energy Assistance today, and I supervise two energy assistance workers who have been with the agency for two years now.

Energy Assistance has two parts. LIHEAP which stands for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Programs has 3 different programs. Fuel Assistance, Crisis Assistance and Cooling Assistance and they each follow a season out of the year.

These programs are funded by the State and Federal governments. The current federal budget that is due to be approved this October does not have funding listed for these LIHEAP programs to continue.

To give you an idea of how this will affect our community, we processed in the last season for each \$1295 Fuel applications, \$1161 Cooling applications and \$353 Crisis applications with a total of 2,809 requests for benefits, while including each program type could have been duplicating households.

Without federal funding all of those requests may bombard our local community resources such as Department of Aging, Helping Hands, United Way, etc.

The other part of Energy Assistance is PIPP which stands for Percentage of Income Payment Program. This program is fairly new and just began July 2024. This program is not funded by our government it is actually funded through AEP which is our local electric vendor and will not be affected by the federal budget. Other localities may have Dominion Energy.

This program runs for a full year with approval, and we just started completing renewals with our first year of the program hitting this past July.

We received 360 PIPP applications from July 2024-December and 383 so far this year to give you an idea of those benefit requests so far.

The PIPP program is basically a discount program to the AEP bill. Eligibility is based on the income of the Energy Assistance household and if eligible the household's payment will decrease to 10% of their gross monthly income. For example, if the household makes \$1,000/mo their new AEP payment will be \$100/mo an if they make \$2,000/mo it would be \$200/mo etc. And if a household has zero income their AEP payment will be \$10/mo. There is a \$10/mo minimum.

Question: What is my opinion or what is my gut telling me will happen with the federal funding of the LIHEAP program?

Answer: I am already currently seeing some changes where federal funding has already been cut to the LIHEAP program. Our federal office for Energy Assistance was cleared and left abandoned leaving doubt about the future of the programs. The budget does not discuss the LIHEAP program in any of our updates as if it is not top priority so I feel the federal budget will cut these programs from their budget. However, the state can still add some type of funding or plan to their budget for LIHEAP if they choose to and with us having a current governor race in Virginia, I am not sure how that may affect the program and local funding. We remain hopeful due to the number of community households this program does help!

Thank you for your time.

*Jessica Shortt*

Benefit Program/Fraud Supervisor

Franklin County Department of Social Services

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### **DEPARTMENT UPDATE: BENEFITS UNIT**

Ashley Rutter, Assistant Director, Benefits Unit, reported statistics for Benefits Report based on most recent PIMR (Performance Indicator Monthly Report) from June 2025 (Note, SNAP information was taken from SNAP apptrack report in VaCMS for more current information-reporting for the month of July):

Program:	FCDSS	GOAL	STATEWIDE
SNAP (expedited)	100%	97%	97%
SNAP	100 %	97%	99%
TANF	100%	97%	97.9%
VIEW	45.8 %	50%	45.7 %
Medicaid Reviews	99.7%	97%	97.5%
Child Care	90.9 %	97%	91.1 %

Ashley Rutter, Assistant Director, Benefits Unit, reported on July 29th, all benefits staff met at the Franklin Center for a quarterly benefits meeting and received SNAP focused training from the SNAP Regional consultant, Amanda Charsha-lindsey. Due to the state's focus on reducing the overall SNAP error rate, the benefits management team created an internal Quality Control process. A random case sampling of 2 cases per month per worker will be reviewed by the supervisory team in an effort to pinpoint SNAP errors and to promote accuracy. In addition, the AD of benefits will perform random case readings of seasoned/veteran workers and provide feedback.

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#### **DEPARTMENT UPDATE: SERVICES UNIT**

Jessica Davis, Assistant Director, Services Unit, reported for the SafeMeasures data reviewed on August 18, 2025, and August 19, 2025, with extraction data of August 17, 2025, and August 19, 2025. For the data pulled, we met AFGAR documentation, Kinship Placements, Foster Care visit, and In Home contacts. We were below the 95% goal for First Victim Contact. We attempted to make contact but could not locate the children until after the response time.

Safe Measures		FCDSS	PIEDMONT	STATE	Prior Month (FCDSS)	Last year year same month (FCDSS)
CPS Timeliness of Victim Contact	GOAL 95%	89.7%	78.9%	80.1%	95.7%	100%
Foster Care Monthly Visits	GOAL 95%	95.9%	91.4%	92%	97.3%	98.5%
In Home Services First Contact	Goal 90%	94.2%	85.4%	86.8%	85.6%	96.5%
AFCARS-Court Documentation in OA	GOAL 95%	98.2%	85%	84.3%	98.1%	100%
Kinship Placements	GOAL 24%	25.5%	25.3%	23.7%	25.5%	17.6%

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#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT/STAFF VACANCY REPORT:**

Anita "Toni" Turner, Director, reviews the Vacancy Report at each Board Meeting reviewing the number of vacancies, interviews in process, and answering any questions asked by Board members.

Anita "Toni" Turner, Director, provided the Board with the following staff vacancy update:

**VACANCY TIME PERIOD: July 16, 2025 – August 15, 2025**

Total Agency Vacancies as of 08/15/2025: 7 Vacancies

Services Division - 5 (#62, #71017, #87, #48 Family Services Specialist I/II for In Home Services/Prevention, Child Protective Services, and Foster Care & #90 (1) Family Partnership Coordinator

Benefits Division - 1 (#49 Fraud Investigator)

Administration Division - 1 (#100597 APAII)

Recruitment in Process: (2) Human Services Assistant III Req 4336 #69 HSAlII Adult Protective Services/In Home Services-Prevention & #22 HSAlII Visitation Coordinator in Foster Care

Applied: 12

Screened: 8 but one withdrew

Interviewing: 6 but one cancelled and 1 NO SHOWED

Offer: 3

HIRED: 2 to report on 08/18/2025 and 08/25/2025 (will show on next month's numbers)

Recruitment in Process: Family Services Specialist I/II (Family Partnership Meeting Facilitator) Req #4335 #90

Applied: 10

Screened: 4

Interviewed: 3

Offer: 1

Hired: 0 REPOSTED 08/13/2025

Recruitment in Process: Family Services Specialist I/II Req #4645 #71017 & #48 Foster Care and Foster Care/Adoption/Recruitment

Applied: TBD

Screened: TBD

Interviewing: TBD

Offer: TBD

HIRED: TBD

Current Postings:

FSS I/II #48 & #71017 & #90 Foster Care/Adoption/Recruitment, Foster Care and Family Partnership Coordinator

Future Postings:

FSS I/II #62 Foster Care  
Fraud Investigator II #49  
APAI #100597

New Hires:  
Ben Novick FSSI #58 In Home Services/Prevention

Promotions:  
N/A

Lateral Move:  
N/A

Temporary Part Time Emergency Worker:  
N/A

Separations:  
Angela Adams #49 Fraud Investigator II

Retirements:  
N/A

Interns:  
Keira Kennedy Ferrum College 1 paid intern under #87 (20 hours week in CPS unit)  
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**UPDATE ON EXECUTED LEASE AGREEMENT**

Anita "Toni" Turner, Director, reported regarding the updated lease on the 1533 Franklin Street office location. The lease has been extended for 3 years with an additional 3 years built in, 2 years at the same rate, 1 year with \$100 extra per month.  
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**OTHER MATTER DISCUSSED**

Mike Carter, BOS member, suggested to Anita "Toni" Turner, Director, she contact Attorney Jim Guynn for FOIA training. He also informed the Board that the FC Administrator is retiring and a new Administrator should be in place by February.

Barry Ferguson asked about the new fleet of cars. Anita "Toni" Turner stated that she really liked the matching fleet of all white cars and she believes everyone is happy with them.  
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**Sharon Tudor, Chair, adjourned the meeting until Tuesday, September 23, 2025.**

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Chairperson

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Secretary