



## RUTHERFORD COUNTY NC

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### Memorandum

**To:** County Manager and Human Resources  
**From:** Delores "Dee" Hunt, DSS Director  
**Date:** March 12, 2026  
**Subject:** Rationale for Child Support Position Restructuring

I am requesting approval to fill the vacant **Child Support Specialist II (CSS II) position previously held by Jeff** and eliminate the current **Child Support Specialist I (CSS I) Intake position**. This restructuring is intended to improve workflow efficiency within the Child Support unit and increase the number of Child Support Orders established for families in Rutherford County.

#### Background and Evaluation

When the CSS II position became vacant, I made the decision not to immediately fill the position. A review of the attached performance spreadsheet showed that Rutherford County was performing near the bottom when compared with the other 100 counties. The statewide performance standard for establishment is **75%**, and at that time our county's performance was significantly below that benchmark.

Leaving the position vacant provided an opportunity to observe the current workflow, assess operational challenges, and evaluate potential structural improvements before refilling the role, particularly given the unit's significantly low establishment performance while operating with two establishment workers.

In January, we hired a Child Support Supervisor with **over 20 years of Child Welfare experience**, who has worked closely with the unit to evaluate workflow processes and identify opportunities for improvement. While we are not yet meeting the **75% statewide standard for establishment**, the worker currently performing establishment duties has consistently achieved **over 50% for several consecutive months**, indicating measurable progress. Historically, the establishment unit operated with two positions, which further supports the need to restructure the workflow to improve performance outcomes.

Based on this evaluation and improved performance trend, we believe the recommended restructuring will position the unit to continue improving and ultimately reach the **state performance standard of 75%**.

#### Current Workflow Structure

Under the current structure, the Intake (CSS I) worker is responsible for scheduling appointments and meeting with clients to receive applications and collect supporting documentation required to open a case. Once all documentation has been received, the case is then transferred to the Establishment (CSS II) worker, who proceeds with establishing the order through either a Voluntary Support Agreement or a Court Order.

While this structure separates responsibilities, it requires a transfer of work between staff, which can delay the progression of cases from intake to establishment.

#### Proposed Structure

We are proposing that the current Intake (CSS I) position be eliminated and that these responsibilities be combined into two **CSS II Intake/Establishment positions**. Under this model, both workers would manage cases from intake through establishment.

Each worker would:

- Meet with clients and complete the intake process, including collection of applications and supporting documentation.
- Open and prepare the case for establishment.
- Proceed with establishment through either a Voluntary Support Agreement or Court Order.
- Manage assigned caseloads (for example, A–L and M–Z, depending on caseload volume).

### **Operational Benefits**

This restructuring will provide several benefits to the unit and the families we serve:

- **Improved Efficiency:** Eliminating the need to transfer cases between staff allows cases to move more quickly through the process.
- **Increased Establishment of Orders:** With two staff members capable of performing both intake and establishment functions, the unit will have greater capacity to establish Child Support Orders.
- **Improved Workflow Management:** Two employees performing the same functions provides flexibility in managing caseloads and responding to client needs.
- **Continuity of Operations:** When one employee is out of the office (leave, illness, training, etc.), the other worker will have the knowledge and authority to respond to client questions, meet with walk-in clients, and continue case processing without interruption.

Allowing two CSS II staff to perform both intake and establishment functions will significantly increase the unit's capacity to move cases from application to court order, reducing processing delays and improving outcomes for families seeking child support services.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The salary difference between a Child Support Specialist I (\$40,771) and a Child Support Specialist II (\$43,947) is **\$3,176 annually**. However, eliminating the Child Support Specialist I Intake position will remove the full personnel cost associated with that position, including salary and fringe benefits.

Based on current budget calculations, the total cost of the CSS I position is **\$63,890.77 annually**, including salary, FICA/Medicare, retirement contributions, 401(k), and health insurance.

As a result, this restructuring represents a **fiscally responsible adjustment that reduces the county's overall personnel obligations while strengthening the unit's operational capacity and improving service delivery to families and children in Rutherford County**.

### **Position Neutral Request**

This request does not create an additional position. Instead, it restructures the current staffing model by filling the budgeted vacant Child Support Specialist II position while eliminating the existing Child Support Specialist I Intake position. This adjustment reduces the county's total personnel obligations while aligning staff responsibilities with the complexity of the work and improving workflow efficiency within the Child Support unit.

This restructuring reflects a thoughtful evaluation of program performance, staffing efficiency, and fiscal responsibility and is intended to position the Child Support program to meet statewide performance standards while maximizing the effective use of county resources.