



## NRFC State Profile: North Carolina June 2016

This profile describes state and federally funded programs and policies that aim to strengthen families. These programs and policies support parenting and father involvement, promote strong family relationships, enhance fathers’ economic stability, and provide support during incarceration and reentry. The profile lists phone numbers and websites for the programs. This information was correct when the profile was written (in 2016) but may change over time.

### Programs to Support Responsible Fatherhood and Strengthen Families

Responsible fatherhood programs focus on issues such as enhancing parenting and relationship skills, keeping fathers involved with their children, improving their economic stability, helping them pay child support, and generally helping to strengthen families.

The following state and federally funded programs are available in the state:

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
<b>Family Services</b>	Fatherhood/Parenting Domestic Violence	Family Services is a state funded organization that provides the <i>Strong Fathers</i> program and the <i>Time Out Intervention Program for Abusers</i> . <i>Strong Fathers</i> is for fathers and father figures who want to improve their parenting skills. The program helps men learn to relate in safe and caring ways with their children, partners, and other family members. <i>Time Out Intervention Program for Abusers</i> helps those exhibiting abusive behavior in their relationships learn to control anger and resolve conflict in non-violent ways. Individuals may be court ordered or enroll voluntarily.	Forsyth County.  <a href="#">Website</a>  (336) 722-8173
<b>Job Corps</b>	Economic Stability	Job Corps is a federal job training program to help low-income young men and women ages 16 to 24 with educational and career goals.	Job Corps centers are located in Kittrell, Franklin, Cherokee, and Pisgah Forest.  <a href="#">Website</a> with locations and phone numbers.

**Take Time to Be a Dad Today**

Toll-free: 877-4DAD411 (877-432-3411) | Fax: 703-934-3740 | [info@fatherhood.gov](mailto:info@fatherhood.gov) | [www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)



[facebook.com/fatherhoodgov](https://www.facebook.com/fatherhoodgov)



[@fatherhoodgov](https://twitter.com/fatherhoodgov)

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
<b>North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence</b>	Domestic Violence	<p>The North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence offers a number of services and programs for domestic violence survivors. Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State-wide and county domestic violence hotlines.</li> <li>• Domestic violence prevention programs.</li> <li>• Child advocacy.</li> <li>• Legal advocacy.</li> <li>• Safety planning.</li> </ul> <p>The coalition also offers training for service providers.</p>	<p>Serves the entire state.</p> <p><a href="#">Website</a> with service providers by county.</p> <p>North Carolina Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<b>The Family Resource Center of Raleigh, Inc.</b>	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability Incarceration/Reentry	<p>The Family Resource Center (FRC) was awarded a federal grant from the Office of Family Assistance in September 2015. The <i>Day 2 Day Dads</i> initiative is helping fathers ages 16-24, who are in the community or incarcerated, strengthen positive father-child engagement. FRC also runs the <i>Parenting Wisely Program</i>, which works with adolescents and their parents, in the family home or in group sessions, to promote a positive and supportive family structure and establish immediate and long-term family goals.</p>	<p>Wake, Durham, Orange and Edgecombe counties.</p> <p><a href="#">Website</a></p> <p>(919) 834-9300</p>

## Policies to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

### Paternity Establishment

Establishing paternity gives a child born outside of marriage the same legal rights and privileges as a child born to married parents. Children gain access to family medical history and rights to inheritance, fathers' medical and life insurance benefits, social security and veterans' benefits, and child support. In addition, Native American children gain tribal enrollment rights.

**In North Carolina, parents can establish paternity through 1) an Affidavit of Parentage or 2) through a civil action. The Affidavit can be completed at the hospital after the child's birth, or at a later time. Both parents must sign a declaration that the father is the child's biological father. The child's mother, alleged father, or Child Support Services can also establish paternity through a civil action. In a civil action, the court may order the child, mother, or alleged father to take a paternity test.<sup>i</sup>**

## Child Custody

If unmarried or divorced parents cannot reach agreement concerning child custody or visitation, a legal order can be made through the court system. Either parent may be granted custody of the child, or both may share equally in physical custody and/or decision-making responsibilities. There is no legal connection between payment or non-payment of child support and rights to visitation.

**In North Carolina, parents are strongly encouraged to come to a custody agreement themselves. This can be completed through 1) a Separation Agreement or a Parenting Agreement, which is not usually filed with the court, or 2) in a Consent Order that is filed with the court. If parents cannot reach an agreement themselves, custody mediation is handled by the North Carolina Child Custody and Visitation Mediation Program.<sup>ii</sup>**

## Child Support

The Federal Child Support Enforcement Program was established in 1975 as Title IV-D of the Social Security Act to locate noncustodial parents, establish paternity and establish and enforce child support orders. General services available in all states and territories include voluntary in-hospital paternity acknowledgement, genetic testing, explanation of state guidelines for determining child support orders, and review of child support orders at least every three years at the request of either parent. State child support offices are responsible for the collection and distribution of child support payments and can modify orders when appropriate. If a parent is behind in their payments, the office may use enforcement tools such as license revocation (including drivers, professional, recreational or occupational licenses), seizure of assets, property liens, passport denial, and federal and state tax refund offsets.<sup>iii</sup>

**In North Carolina, Child Support Services (CSS) is in charge of child support. Guidelines for determining child support amounts are based on the needs of the child and the ability of the parent to pay it. Child care costs are also added to child support obligations and are determined based on both parents' incomes. Go to the [CSS website](#) or call (800) 992-9457 for more information.**

## The Family and Medical Leave Act

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) protects employees who have worked with the same organization for at least twelve months and worked at least 1,250 hours within the past year. It contains provisions for both fathers and mothers to take time off after the birth or adoption of a child, or during a serious illness, without fear of losing their jobs. Employees in companies with 50 or more employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, over a one-year period, to care for a new child, recuperate from a serious illness, care for a seriously ill family member, or handle issues arising from a family member's call to active military duty. The FMLA also gives employees the right to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a family member who is seriously injured or becomes ill while on active military duty.<sup>iv</sup>

**In addition to FMLA, North Carolina provides school-related parental leave. Parents have the option to take up to four unpaid hours a year to participate in children's educational activities.<sup>v</sup>**

**North Carolina also provides Domestic Violence Leave, which prohibits employers from discharging, demoting, disciplining, or denying a promotion to an employee who takes "reasonable time off" from work to obtain a protective order. The employee must follow the employer's usual leave practices, which includes providing advance notice unless an emergency prevents the employee from doing so.<sup>vi</sup>**

## Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded school readiness program for young children from low-income families. The program, currently delivered by about 1,700 local organizations – public and private, non-profit and for-profit – provides preschoolers with comprehensive services, such as education and health screenings, with the goal of building their skills across five school readiness domains: language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical development and health, and social and emotional development. Head Start encourages the role of parents

(both mothers and fathers) as their child's first and most important teachers. Programs build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being, and connections to peers and community. Early Head Start, also managed by the federal Office of Head Start, is directed toward children up to the age of three and their parents. While the program is federally funded and managed, local agencies make decisions regarding service delivery based on the specific needs of their communities; for example, some may opt to include home-based services for families in their programs. Most states have multiple Head Start programs providing services for fathers.

To find information on Head Start programs in North Carolina, go to this [website](#).

## Policies to Promote Economic Stability

### Child Care Assistance

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) works with states to provide support for children and their low-income families. Subsidized child care services are available to eligible families through certificates (vouchers), grants, or contracts with providers. Fathers and mothers may select a child care provider that satisfies applicable state and local requirements, including basic health and safety requirements.<sup>vii</sup>

**In North Carolina, the Division of Child Development provides subsidized child care services for eligible families. In addition to financial criteria, families must fall under one or more of the following situations: 1) be working or attempting to find work, 2) be enrolled in school or a job training program, 3) require child care to support child protective services or child welfare services, 4) be experiencing a family crisis, or 5) have a child with developmental needs. Most families who receive child care assistance are required to pay about 10 percent of their child care costs based on their monthly income.**<sup>viii</sup>

### Rental Assistance

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides rental assistance to low-income families and individuals through a number of methods. HUD subsidizes privately owned apartments, allowing low-income tenants to rent them at reduced rates. In the Public Housing program, local housing agencies manage rental housing for low-income tenants, while HUD provides professional and technical assistance in their planning, development, and management. The Housing Choice Voucher Program, better known as Section 8, provides eligible families and individuals with vouchers that they can use to pay for all or part of the rent at housing units of their choice. Generally, eligibility for the HUD rental assistance programs is based on annual gross income, assets, family size, and other considerations such as elderly or disabled status. Local housing agencies generally set the fixed eligibility rules for their regions, determine assistance amounts, and manage waiting lists for assistance.<sup>ix</sup>

**North Carolina has no additional state provisions for rental assistance.**

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp program, provides low-income individuals (both men and women) and families with funds delivered in an electronic benefit transfer card, or EBT card) that can be used to purchase food. SNAP is administered within the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services and is federally funded, but applications, delivery, and outreach are handled at the state or local level. In general, individuals and households are eligible to receive SNAP if they have less than \$2,250 in countable resources and earn less than 130 percent of the poverty line in gross monthly income. However, characteristics of recipients (for example, age or disabled status) can affect eligibility requirements, and states have flexibility in determining eligibility, particularly with regard to what is considered a countable resource. In many states, individuals over the age of 18 and under the age of 50 are limited to three months of SNAP benefits every three years unless they are working or in a work or training program 20 hours a week. Some states have waivers to this rule for all or part of the state – for detailed state eligibility requirements, consult the [state SNAP agency](#).<sup>x</sup>

In North Carolina, residents may qualify for SNAP if they 1) have a bank balance (savings and checking combined) under \$2,001, or 2) have a bank balance (savings and checking combined) under \$3,001 and share a household with someone age 60 and over, or someone with a disability (a child, your spouse, a parent, or yourself).<sup>xi</sup>

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program grants federal funds to states for developing and implementing their own welfare programs that provide assistance and work opportunities to needy families.

In North Carolina, TANF is called **Work First Cash Assistance (WFCA)**. WFCA helps eligible families experiencing a financial emergency pay for housing and utilities. To be eligible, families must have 1) a child who lives with a relative as defined by Work First Family Assistance, 2) a total income at or below 200 percent of the poverty level, and 3) proof of identity and citizenship. WFCA also offers **Benefit Diversion**, which is an optional alternative to traditional cash assistance for families experiencing a temporary employment crisis. Services offered include 1) a one-time payment equal to up to three months of Work First Family Assistance benefits, 2) Medicaid and Food Nutrition Services, 3) child care referrals, and 4) employment services. All WFCA applicants must register for First Stop Employment Assistance Program to be eligible for Work First Family Assistance.<sup>xii</sup>

## Other Helpful Resources

### NC Works

NC Works Online is a one-stop online resource for job seekers and employers in North Carolina. It is operated by the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Job seekers can search for jobs, create resumes, and find education and training. Employers can find candidates, post jobs, and search labor market information. For more information, visit the [website](#).

### North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security

The website of the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security provides links and instructions to help individuals apply for unemployment, file claims, and locate training and job assistance. For more information, visit the [website](#) and/or the link for [job assistance](#).

### North Carolina Cooperative Extension

The [North Carolina Cooperative Extension](#) developed [Purposeful Parenting: A Manual for Extension Educators](#), which provides information for educators working with incarcerated fathers.

## References

<sup>i</sup> For more information on Paternity Establishment in North Carolina, see <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/cse/man/CSEcl-02.htm>.

<sup>ii</sup> For more information on Child Custody in North Carolina, see <http://www.ncbar.org/media/209956/child-custody-visitation-and-child-support.pdf> and <http://www.nccourts.org/Citizens/CPrograms/Default.asp>.

<sup>iii</sup> For more information on the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, see [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css).

<sup>iv</sup> For more information on the Family and Medical leave Act, see <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28f.pdf>.

<sup>v</sup> For more information on School/Parental Leave in North Carolina, see <http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/state-family-and-medical-leave-laws.aspx>.

<sup>vi</sup> For more information on Domestic Violence Leave in North Carolina, see

---

<https://www.legalmomentum.org/sites/default/files/reports/Employment%20Rights%20of%20Domestic%20and%20Sexual%20Violence%20Victims%20-%20rev%209-15.pdf>.

vii For more information on the Child Care and Development Fund, see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/about/what-we-do>.

viii For more information on child care assistance in North Carolina, see [http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/parents/pr\\_sn2\\_diq.asp](http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/parents/pr_sn2_diq.asp).

ix For more information on Rental Assistance, see [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental\\_assistance](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental_assistance).

x For more information on SNAP and to find services in your state, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply>.

xi For more information on SNAP in North Carolina, see <http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/1389>.

xii For more information on Work First Cash Assistance, see <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/work-first-cash-assistance>.