

# NC FAST

North Carolina Families Accessing  
Services through Technology



December 14-15, 2015



North Carolina  
Department of  
Health & Human Services



The goal of today's workshop is to discuss upcoming changes to the Subsidized Child Care Assistance business process, including:

- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



- **Impacts on the Child Care Worker**
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



With NC FAST Go-Live Child Care Workers and/or Supervisors will

## Start:



- Keying all applications, changes, and recertifications in NC FAST.
- Using NC FAST to manage the Waiting List.
- Reacting to tasks in NC FAST.
- Managing their workload in NC FAST.
- Using NC FAST for certain Subsidized Child Care Assistance (SCCA) reports.

## Stop:



- Using SCCRS and other case processing systems (i.e. One Case)
- Issuing payments to providers.
- Managing a Waiting List outside of NC FAST (i.e. in Excel).

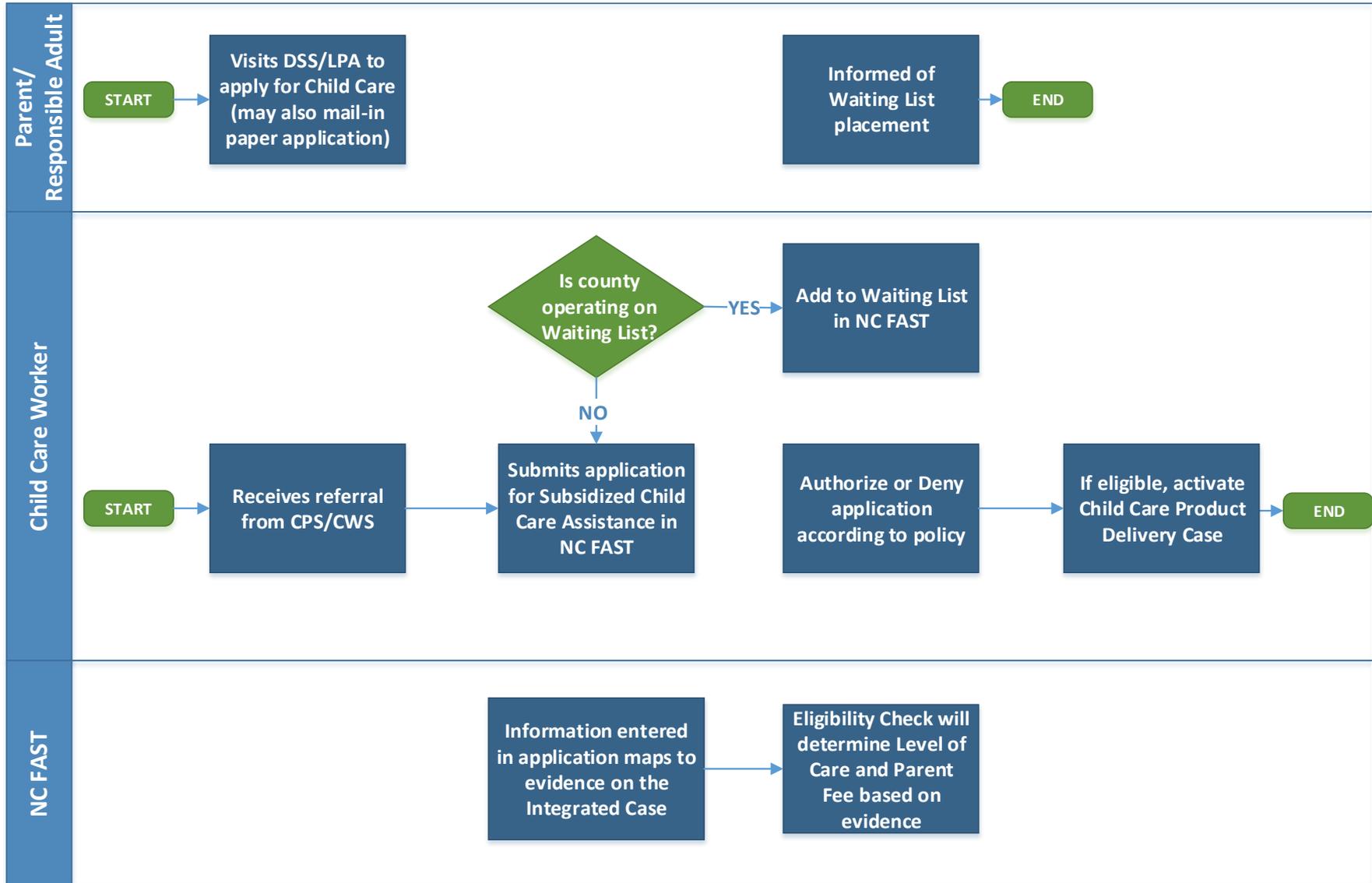
## Continue:



- Following all SCCA policies.
- Setting the Waiting List priority.



# Child Care Worker Intake Process





- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- **New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult**
  - **ePASS**
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



Parents/Responsible Adults will:

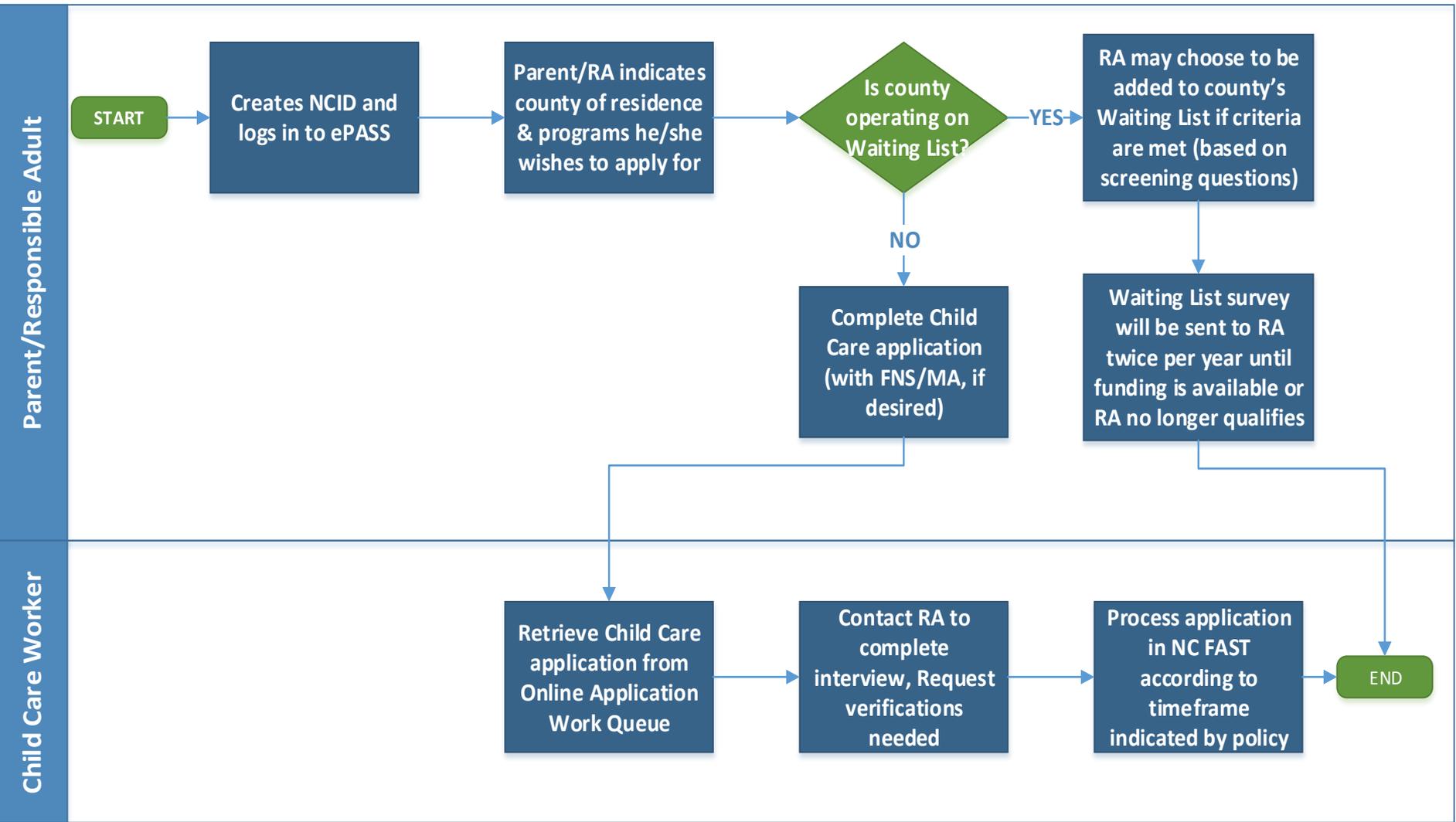
- Have the ability to apply for SCCA via ePASS.
- Be able to add their child(ren) to the Waiting List via ePASS, when applicable.
- Have the ability to respond to certain notices via ePASS (i.e. Waiting List Survey).
- Continue to be able to apply at the LPA.
- Continue to sign the voucher. However, they may be able to sign it via ePASS, to prevent additional visits to the LPA.



ePASS  
Public Portal of  
NC FAST

## **Parent/RA may use ePASS to apply for Subsidized Child Care Assistance online.**

- Must have an NCID to apply (need email address).
- Parent/Response Adult identifies county of residence.
- County on Waiting List? RA answers screening questions to establish Waiting List eligibility, may add child(ren) to Waiting List if criteria are met.
- If county is not on Waiting List, RA may complete an application to apply for SCCA (integrated with FNS/Traditional MA, if they choose). NC FAST will create a stand-alone application/Integrated Case for SCCA.
- Application will be received via a work queue to be processed in NC FAST by the child care worker.
- DSS (CPS/CWS/WF etc.) referrals and Emergency applications will NOT be handled via ePASS.





Counties will need to respond to applications submitted via ePASS.

- Child Care workers will need to be assigned to the SCCA ePASS application work queue in order to process applications submitted via ePASS.
- ePASS applications for SCCA will be sent to a **different** queue than those for FNS and Medicaid.
- The next slide shows the pages involved when getting an application from a work queue.



# County Action Required with ePASS

Home Clients and Outcomes **Inbox** Calendar Reports

Enter Reference Number

My Tasks

**My Tasks** ACTIONS

My Open Tasks My Deferred Tasks Assigned Tasks

Open Tasks

| Subject | Priority | Deadline | Work Started |
|---------|----------|----------|--------------|
|---------|----------|----------|--------------|

- Get Next Task...
- Get Next Task From Preferred Org Unit...
- Get Next Task From Preferred Queue...
- Get Next Task From Queue...**
- New Task...
- Task Preferences

My Tasks

**My Tasks** ACTIONS

My Open Tasks My Deferred Tasks Assigned Tasks

Open Tasks

| Subject | Work Started | Status |
|---------|--------------|--------|
|---------|--------------|--------|

Get Next Task From Work Queue ? x

\* required field

Work Queue \* Child Care Application Received - Lee County

Save Cancel



- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- **Electronic Vouchers**
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



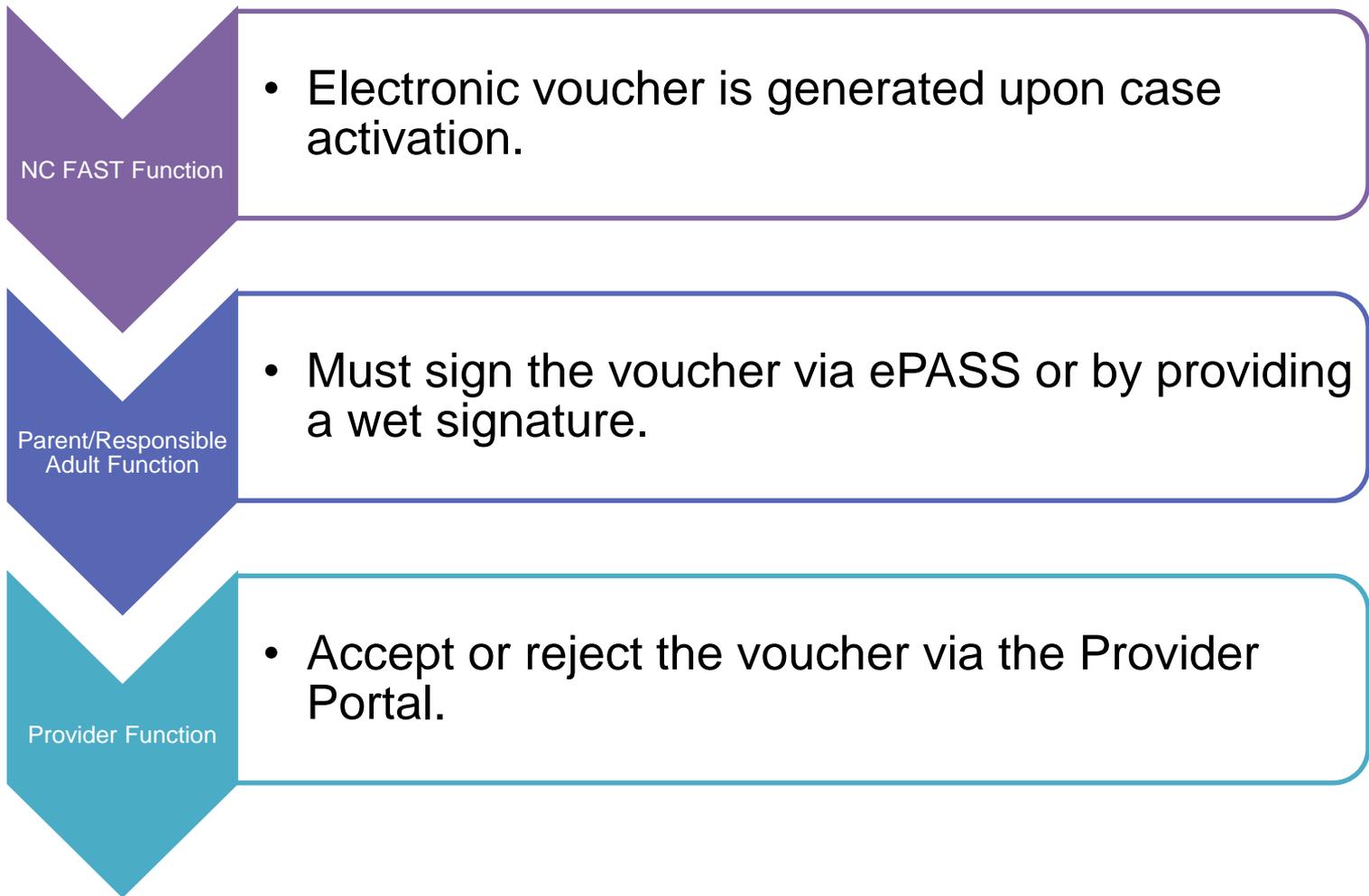
In NC FAST, vouchers will be created based on the information entered on the SCCA application. This information is stored as Evidence on the SCCA Integrated Case.

- Vouchers will be generated upon activation of the Product Delivery Case (PDC).
- Voucher information will be determined by Plan of Care evidence. This evidence will contain details related to the need for care, care schedule, provider selection, and service start/end dates.
- Each child on the case will have his or her own unique Plan of Care evidence and voucher.
- Payments will be made by the State and released by NC FAST via direct deposit.



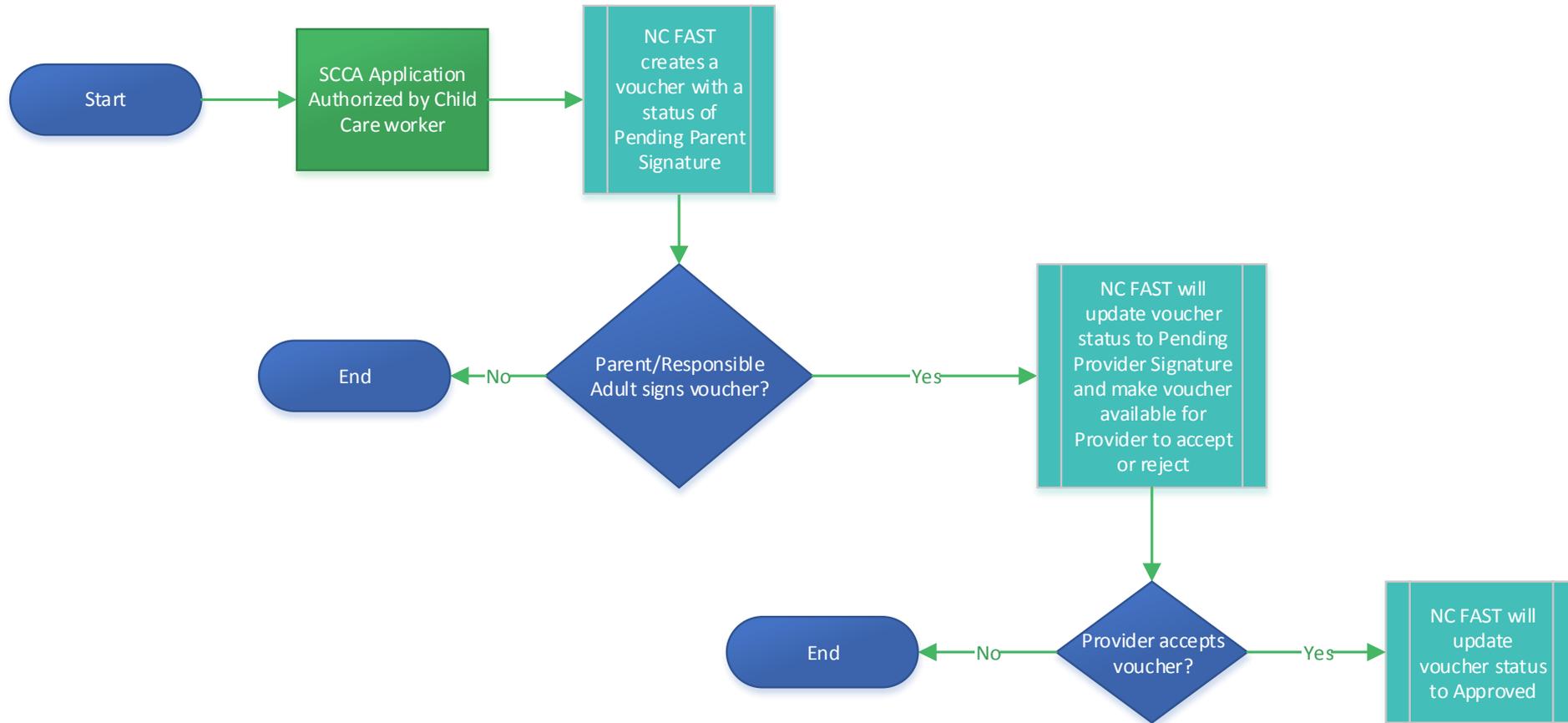
# High Level Voucher Overview

Vouchers will be handled electronically with communication between NC FAST and the Provider Portal. They will no longer be completed on paper.





# Voucher Signature Process



Note: This process assumes the provider is licensed and enrolled, and both the provider and Parent/Responsible Adult sign the voucher timely.



# Voucher Statuses

Vouchers will have multiple statuses to indicate their progress.

- **Pending Parent Signature** – This is the voucher status when it is initially generated.
- **Pending-Cancellation Parent Signature** –When a voucher is not signed by the Parent/Responsible Adult within 20 calendar days the voucher will be in this status for the next 10 days.
- **On-Hold** – When a voucher is generated for providers who **are licensed but not enrolled, after** the Parent/Responsible Adult signs the voucher.
- **Pending Provider Signature** – After the Parent/Responsible Adult signs the voucher but before the Provider has accepted or rejected the voucher.
- **Pending-Cancellation Provider Signature** – When the provider does not sign a voucher within 20 calendar days the voucher will be in this status for the next 10 calendar days.
- **Pending-Cancellation Provider Enrollment** – After a voucher is on-hold and the provider is not enrolled for SCCA within 20 calendar days the voucher will be updated to this status for the next 10 calendar days.



## Voucher Statuses

- **Approved** – The provider has accepted the voucher. No further action is required.
- **Rejected** – The provider has rejected the voucher. The Parent/Responsible Adult must choose a different provider.
- **Canceled** – The provider or Parent/Responsible Adult has not signed the voucher timely, the provider is licensed but not enrolled in a timely manner or the provider license is cancelled/expired.
- **Reissued** – If a worker reissues a canceled voucher the voucher will show a status of reissued.
- **Voided** – After a voucher is generated, if the corresponding child is ineligible for SCCA due to a Change in Circumstance before the voucher is accepted/rejected by the provider or cancelled by NC FAST, NC FAST will mark the voucher as voided and it will not be shown in the Provider Portal. Voided vouchers cannot be reissued.



- Workers will have the ability to search for vouchers in NC FAST using multiple criteria including: Provider name, voucher status, case reference number, and participant (child).
- Vouchers will be located on the SCCA Product Delivery Case (PDC) on the Financials tab, within the Vouchers folder.
- When Parents/Responsible Adults provide a wet signature, Child Care workers will need to indicate receipt in NC FAST by manually updating the voucher status to “Pending Provider Signature” on the PDC.
- All vouchers with status of Pending Parent Signature, Pending-Cancellation Parent Signature, Pending Provider Signature, Pending-Cancellation Provider Signature, Pending-Cancellation Provider Enrollment, and On-Hold are shown under the Voucher list page for a provider in the Provider Portal. The same information along with the remaining statuses are displayed for Child Care workers at each PDC.



- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- **Waiting List**
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



Children may be **added** to the Waiting list via ePASS or by a Child Care worker during the intake process. Both methods will ensure the Parent/Responsible Adult has met the Waiting List screening criteria.

There are different ways children may be **removed** from the Waiting List, depending on the circumstance. When subsidy funds become available and Parents/Responsible Adults are selected to apply, they will need to be sent an Apply for Services Notice. The child will be removed from the Waiting List in one of two ways:

- If the Parent/Responsible Adult **applies** in response to the notice, NC FAST will automatically remove the child from the Waiting List.
- If the Parent/Responsible Adult **does not respond** to the Apply for Services notice, workers will need to manually remove the child from the Waiting List.



When manually removing a child from the Waiting List, workers will choose the removal reason from a drop-down list that includes:

- No longer in need
- Parent/Responsible Adult Requested Removal
- No Response to Survey

**Note:** When a child is served with time-limited funds he or she will not be removed from the Waiting List.



## Viewing the Waiting List

- Within NC FAST, Child Care Workers will have a folder called Waiting List Management. Here, workers can search, view, and manage the Waiting List for their county.
- Workers will have the ability to search the Waiting List based on different criteria including: Need for Care, Child Age, and Date Added to Waiting List.
- The Waiting List will also display the Waiting List position number. This indicates the child's position on the Waiting List.
- Another way workers can view Waiting List information is on the Person Page, Care and Protection tab of both the Parent/Responsible Adult and child.



Each county will have the ability to indicate their Waiting List status (whether or not they are on a Waiting List) as needed. To do this, Child Care County Administrators will use the County Waiting List Configuration page in NC FAST.

When the Waiting List needs to be configured, the Child Care County Administrator will add a new record using the configuration page. The Administrator will indicate why the county is on a Waiting List by checking the appropriate box(es):

- Subsidy Funds Not Available
- Special Needs Funds Not Available
- Provider Slots Not Available
- Insufficient Staff
- CPS/CWS/WF/Foster Care Services Not Available



## Waiting List Configuration

Once the Waiting List has been configured, NC FAST will identify which applications may bypass the Waiting List. For example, when the need type is DSS referral (Child Protective Services, Child Welfare Services, Work First, etc.) and the county is on a Waiting List for “Subsidy Funds Not Available” and/or “Special Needs Funds Not Available” the Waiting List will be bypassed. **Note:** DSS referrals will not be handled via ePASS, only through Child Care worker intake upon referral.

When there is a change in county Waiting List status, the Administrator will have the ability to remove or edit the county’s Waiting List configuration. Historical Waiting List statuses will be maintained in NC FAST.



# Waiting List Configuration

Add a new Waiting List configuration record

County Waiting List Configuration

County Name Wake County

| Regular Subsidy Funds not Available | Special Need Funds not Available | Provider Slot not available | Insufficient Staff | CPS/CWS/FC/WF CC Service not available | Start Date | End Date   |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--|------------|------------|
| Yes                                 | Yes                              | No                          | No                 | Yes                                    | 08/29/2015 |            |
| Yes                                 | Yes                              | No                          | No                 | No                                     | 06/29/2015 | 08/28/2015 |
| Yes                                 | No                               | No                          | No                 | No                                     | 05/28/2015 | 06/28/2015 |

Remove

Edit

Edit a Waiting List configuration record



NC FAST will aid in streamlining the Waiting List survey process

- Twice a year, NC FAST will generate survey notices for Parents/Responsible Adults who have been on the Waiting List for four months or longer.
- Survey notices will be sent via the State (DHHS Central Print). Parents/Responsible Adults may have the ability to respond via ePASS.
- The survey will ask questions to determine if the household still meets Waiting List criteria and wishes to remain on the Waiting List. Parents/Responsible Adults will have 14 calendar days to complete and return the survey to the LPA.



- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- **Fund Management**
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



- NC FAST will become the system used to manage all of the funding sources.
- Funds are defined for each county annually based on fiscal year.
- County receives an allocation for Smart Start and an allocation for non-Smart Start funds.
- Counties create and manage county funds separately in NC FAST from the above-allocated funds.
- There will be two new roles introduced for individuals who will manage funds.
- NC FAST will introduce new terminology related to fund management.



| Term                | Definition  |
|---------------------|---|
| Fund                | A fund is the placeholder for the monies (allocations) available to the county. This was previously known as funding source or fund source.   |
| Fiscal Year         | Fiscal years are periods used for tracking fund fiscal year budgets   |
| Fund Fiscal Year    | A fund fiscal year is an association of the fund and the fiscal year. A fund fiscal year for the purposes of child care will be the equivalent of the state fiscal year. A fund fiscal year can have many line items associated with it. A fund fiscal year line item contains details of monies available for a fund for a given fiscal year. Each line item contains the initial budget allocation for that funding source, for a specified period. |
| Fund Configurations | A fund configuration defines the characteristics of the fund. This includes the ranking of the fund, whether a fund is being over-obligated and the over-obligation grace percentage.   |
| Obligation          | The amount earmarked for a client from a fund fiscal year.  |
| Total Budgeted      | The total budgeted amount for a fund fiscal year.   |
| Budgeted Balance    | The difference between the budgeted amount and the obligation amount.   |
| Obligation Summary  | The summary of all the obligations on a specific fund fiscal year. This will display all the details of the obligations created for the fund fiscal year.   |
| Budget Adjustment   | The Budget Adjustment details any adjustments made to the initial budget allocation.  |
| Threshold           | A threshold (or bucket) is a valid combination of an eligible fund and a FRC code (that is in turn linked to a grant).  |



## Rankings:

- NC FAST will use the default ranking defined by DCDEE, which is the order in which funds should be used.
- Smart Start funds will be used before SCCA funds.
- This can be can be changed by the county at any time during the fiscal year.

## Obligations:

- Funds will be obligated or earmarked for a case for the entire service period (fiscal year) at case approval/voucher generation.
- This is not a payment, only a set-aside for the case and that case alone.
- The obligation is automatically adjusted as payments are made, when there are changes in circumstance, or when a case closes.
- In order for NC FAST to make a payment on a case, funds must be obligated from either Smart Start or non-Smart Start funds. County funds are not eligible for a draw-down.
- Once a payment is made, it is tracked back to the threshold.



## Over-Obligations:

- Smart Start, non-Smart Start, and regular county funds must be configured to allow over-obligation. This can only be done by the DCDEE Budgeting User for Smart Start and Non-Smart Start funds and the LPA Fund Manager for county funds.
- When county funds need to be used, the Child Care worker indicates this in NC FAST, so it will obligate from county funds. If funds are depleted, NC FAST checks to see if the funds are configured for over-obligation. If so, it will over-obligate the fund and reflect a negative balance in the fund.

Note: Even though a fund can be over-obligated, the total obligation amount for the county must not exceed the allocation for that fiscal year.



## Spending Coefficients:

- NC FAST will have a Spending Coefficient Page.
- Counties and DCDEE can monitor the spending patterns to determine when payments are exceeding the monthly “allowance.”
- This is specific to Smart Start and non-Smart Start funds, not county funds.



## Thresholds:

- NC FAST will use the obligated fund and case evidence to evaluate the thresholds to determine the appropriate threshold for the case. Payment will be drawn down from that threshold.
- If more than one threshold is eligible, the threshold ranking is used to determine the appropriate threshold.
- If that threshold is depleted, the next ranked threshold will be used.
- NC FAST will store the payment info for reporting and adjust the threshold amount.



## New Security Roles:

- LPA Fund Manager
  - This is a county- or LPA-specific role
  - This user creates and maintains the county funds, Work First MOE, TANF Federal, and TANF (Child Only).
  - When this user creates and configures a fund, they can set up a Fund Balance Alert that will send a task if the fund balance falls below the designated level during the fiscal year.
- DCDEE Budgeting Manager
  - This is a statewide user who handles state-managed funds and has the ability to maintain and configure funds.



## How to Prepare

- Determine who will serve in the LPA Fund Manager role.
- Involve this person early in the process.
- Share any NC FAST material that addresses Fund Management, such as the Change Discussion Guide.
- Ensure he or she is provisioned for an NCID and is assigned the appropriate role in NC FAST.
- Determine this person's training needs (are they experienced in Fund Management? NC FAST?)



- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- **Impacts on the Provider**
  - **Provider Portal**
  - **Provider Outreach Plan**
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



To continue participation with SCCA, providers will be required to utilize the Provider Portal. The Provider Portal will house the following functions:

- Enrolling in SCCA
- Accepting or rejecting children into their care
- Updating rates for services
- Renewing the Annual Agreement
- Recording attendance and submitting the roster



With NC FAST Go-Live Child Care Providers will

## Start:



- Completing the Annual Agreement via the Provider Portal.
- Entering attendance via the Provider Portal, this is required for provider payment.
- Receiving payments via direct deposit.

## Stop:



- Submitting paper attendance rosters to the LPA.
- Receiving payments directly from the LPA.
- Managing their Annual Agreement on paper.

## Continue:



- Reacting to vouchers.
- Submitting attendance.



## Provider Action

- Create a business NCID account, this will be used to access the provider portal (instructions will be provided).

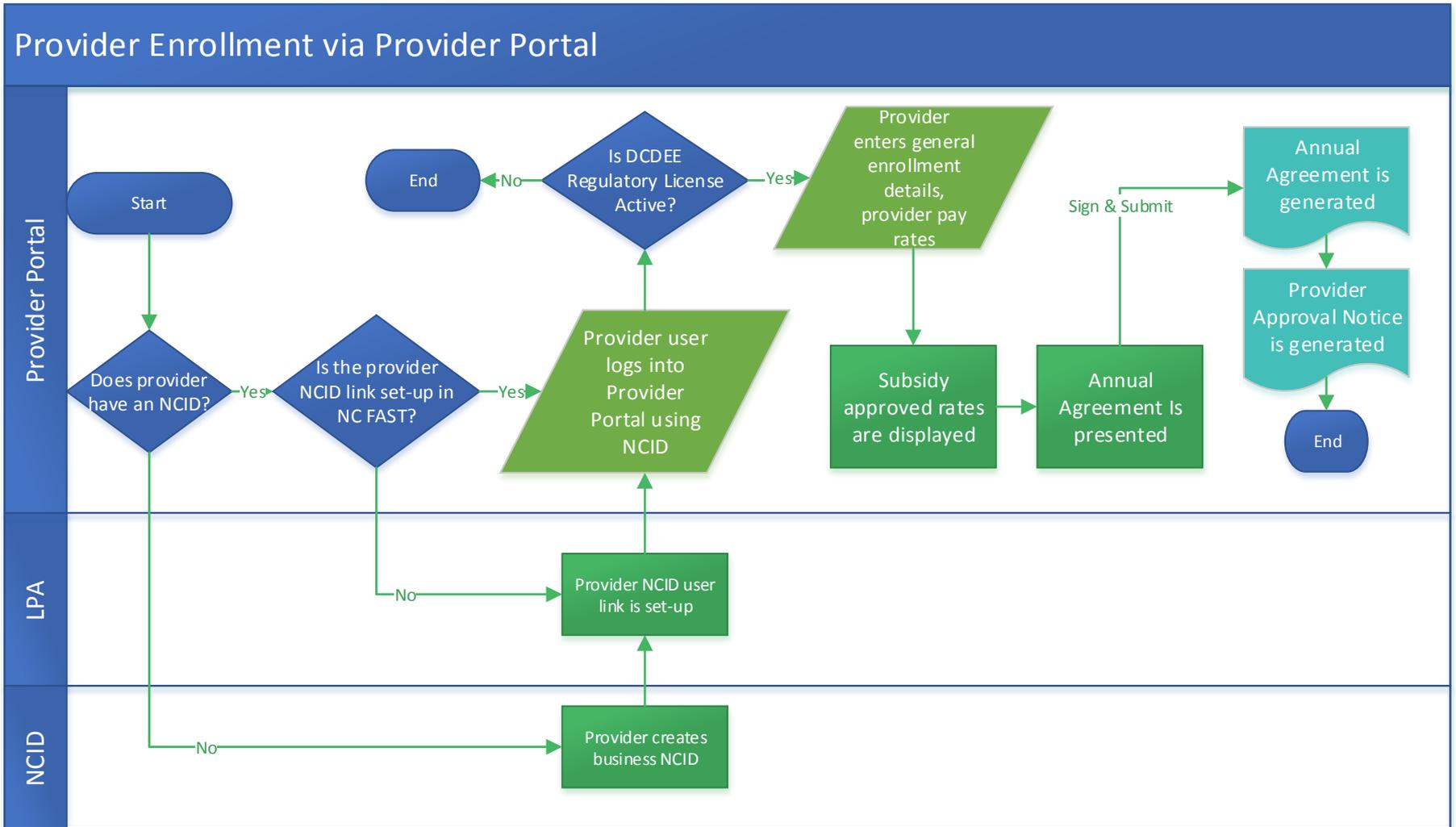
- Maintain an active bank account, this is required in order to receive direct deposit payments.

- Have the ability to access internet.

- Use the Provider Portal to manage SCCA workload.



# Provider enrollment in the Provider Portal





## Provider Outreach Plan

NC FAST and DCDEE are working together to create a communications plan for providers. Beginning in January 2016, we will start to publish outreach materials geared specifically for providers, including:

- Monthly one to two-page Provider Bulletins with information on the NC FAST Provider Portal. Bulletins will be published on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- As-needed instructional guides for required activities in preparation for Subsidized Child Care Assistance go-live (i.e. how to create an NCID).
- Provider Change Discussion Guide – with additional details on start, stop, continue activities for providers; high level to-be business processes, and activities timeline.
- Provider training materials, such as webinars and Job Aids will be created and distributed closer to go-live.



# Provider Awareness

How can we ensure that providers receive these materials?

- The SEEK folder on the DCDEE website ([www.ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.nc.gov)) will be replaced with a folder titled “NC FAST.”

**SEEK - Subsidized Early Education for Kids**

Over the past several years, our Department has been working with county Departments of Social Services on improving the integration of services that are provided at the local level. Our goal is to assure that families are served in a comprehensive way and that the state and counties are working together to make operational improvements, maximize the use of technology, and assure that our service delivery system is as efficient as possible.

In support of this effort, the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) has begun work on the child care component of the larger DHHS case management system (NC FAST). This project will be designed to improve and streamline our application process, provide better case management capabilities across services and ultimately incorporate a new process for collecting and assuring time and attendance within the child care program.

In advance of these upcoming changes, DCDEE will discontinue utilization of the SEEK time and attendance system after April 30, 2015. Information specific to next steps for local purchasing agencies, child care providers and parents can be found in the memorandums below.

**Important Note for child care providers:** Do not dispose of your POS machine(s), as these remain property of the vendor. Click [here](#) for specific instructions on [how to return your POS machine](#), including how to request a box and pre-paid shipping label through [www.eccreturns.com](http://www.eccreturns.com).

- Messages will be added to the Child Reimbursement Summary forms indicating when materials are posted and where to find them.
- Email blasts to Resource & Referral Groups and provider organizations with materials attached.
- Provider outreach materials will also be sent to County Champions for distribution as you wish.



- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- **Conversion Plan**
- Farewell



# SCCA Case Conversion

- Based on lessons learned and feedback on the conversion process for previous projects, the Project 3 Executive Advisory Subcommittee (EAS) provided recommendations and considerations for the conversion of Child Care Cases to the Executive Advisory Committee (EAC).
- The EAC approved the following directions/recommendations for how to convert Subsidized Child Care cases from SCCRS into NC FAST:
  1. Provider information needs to be created prior to cases being entered into NC FAST.
  2. Entering cases into NC FAST “new” is preferred to automated electronic conversion; simplified training and reduced likelihood of errors when processing.
  3. When a case is entered into NC FAST it should retain its existing certification end date.
  4. Items normally created as part of the new case entry process, such as generation of a new child care voucher, should only occur if necessary when an active case is manually converted into NC FAST (if possible, currently in design discussions).
  5. If eligibility results/parent fees after keying into NC FAST are different from existing results/amounts, counties should process using the correct eligibility.



- Recommendations continued:
  6. The existing order of the waiting list should be maintained when a county goes live.
  7. To avoid adding new Waiting List entries prior to the existing Waiting List being entered, ePASS functionality should not be implemented until existing Waiting Lists are entered statewide.
  8. Reports tracking case entry progress need to be provided and monitored.
  9. Deeming income from FNS and registering individuals are recommended ways that counties can start familiarizing staff with the system and save time when keying cases at go-live.
  10. All active cases, including those in the middle of their certification period, need to be entered in NC FAST within the go-live month/window to avoid paying providers and reconciling payments out of two systems for a given county the following month.
  
- Counties/LPAs need to plan for any workload or staffing impacts for go-live, particularly leading into and during the month of conversion.
- NC FAST and DCDEE are evaluating all options to provide as much time as possible for manual case entry, details regarding the specific case conversion process will be provided as they become available.



- Impacts on the Child Care Worker
- New options for the Parent/Responsible Adult
  - ePASS
- Electronic Vouchers
- Waiting List
- Fund Management
- Impacts on the Provider
  - Provider Portal
  - Provider Outreach Plan
- Conversion Plan
- Farewell



- **Fact Sheets** – Monthly one or two-page communications that share high-level information on a specific topic. There have been 3 issues to date with topics including NC FAST Resources, Introduction to SCCA in NC FAST, and Provider Portal.
- **County Champion Calls** – Monthly calls hosted by the NC FAST Implementation team where relevant information and updates are shared.
- **Communication Emails** – As needed emails which are color-coded to represent priority level. Red emails show urgent notifications, yellow represents high priority information and green emails are non-urgent yet valuable. A green “Weekly Communication” is sent Friday mornings with a summary of the week’s communications.
- **FAST Help** – A key resource which houses job aids, procedures, system availability, and certain reports. This is the first stop for most workers when they need to learn something new or troubleshoot. To access FAST Help visit [ncfasthelp.nc.gov](http://ncfasthelp.nc.gov), users will need a valid NCID, typically assigned by the county technical champion. Currently, there is one job aid intended for Child Care workers titled: SCCA – Deeming FNS Income.