North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services

Pat McCrory
Governor

Aldona Z. Wos, M.D.
Ambassador (Ret.)
Secretary DHHS

Wayne E. Black
Division Director

January 29, 2015

Dear County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: County Information Security Officers
County Information System Support Staff

SUBJECT: Microsoft Windows XP Remediation

Dear County Director Letter number PM-REM-07-2014 (November 20, 2014) reminded counties that Microsoft Corporation ended Technical Support for the Windows XP operating system on April 8, 2014. Counties still running Microsoft XP on any computers were advised to formulate a remediation plan and replace all end-of-life-cycle software, including Windows XP, as soon as possible.

Federal and State regulations require users of State information systems and those accessing Federal data (such as IRS data) to maintain up-to-date, secure operating systems with the latest security patches installed. Failure to comply with these regulations can lead to non-compliance findings, corrective action plans and even loss of access to vital information necessary to administer service and benefit programs.

The NC Statewide Information Security Manual, Section 040207 specifically states "Each agency shall ensure that the operating systems used to run the production environment are regularly monitored for security risks and maintained in approved secure configurations to support business operations." The NC Statewide Information Security Manual can be accessed at https://www.scio.nc.gov/Mission/InformationSecurityManual.aspx. Any laptop or workstation still using Windows XP does not meet this standard as set forth in Section 040207.

As such, the DHHS Privacy and Security Office has escalated the urgency of this issue. **All County DSS offices are to respond to the attached survey by February 6, 2015, reporting whether any computers in use conduct NC DHHS business are still running Windows XP and, if so, a count of those machines. Do not forget to include County operated Child Support Offices.** Information from this survey will be provided to the PSO and conveyed to the DHHS CISO and the Secretary.

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Counties are further advised that they must take the necessary steps to upgrade or replace any computers still running Windows XP by no later than March 1, 2015, or discontinue use of the machines.

If you have any questions about this subject, please do not hesitate to contact Hank Bowers at Hank.Bowers@dhhs.nc.gov, Betty Dumas-Beasley at Betty.J.Beasley@dhhs.nc.gov or Linda Owens at Linda.Owens@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Wayne E. Black, Director
Division of Social Services

Robin Gary Cummings, M.D.
Deputy Secretary for Health Services Director
Director, Division of Medical Assistance

Suzanne Merrill, Director
Division of Aging and Adult Services

DCDL DSS-03-2015
DCDL AFS-01-2015

Attachment: Windows XP Remediation Survey

Cc: Wayne Black
Jack Rogers
Pyreddy Reddy

- County DSS Letterhead –

Date

To: Hank Bowers, Chief
NC DSS Performance Management,
Reporting and Evaluation management

From: *Name*
Title

Re: Windows XP Remediation Survey

As of the date of this survey response *County DSS Name*:
(check and complete all that apply)

_____ Has **no** computers used to conduct DHHS business running Windows XP

_____ Has ___(number)_____ computers used to conduct DHHS business still running Windows XP

_____ Does **not** have an agreement with Microsoft for extended support of Windows XP

_____ Has a current agreement with Microsoft for extended support of Windows XP through the following date: _____

_____ Is currently in the process of upgrading or replacing computers still running Windows XP. All upgrades and/or replacements will be completed as of the following date: ____(date)_____.

The above information includes all computers used by remote workers, contractors, Child Support Enforcement offices or other entities to conduct DHHS business on behalf of the County DSS.

Respondent signatures:

_____ _____
Name *Name*

_____ _____
Title *Title*

E-mail completed survey (Word or PDF document) to Hank.Bowers@dhhs.nc.gov no later than February 6, 2015.