A Serious Crime

Public Assistance Fraud

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

For More Information: Contact the appropriate division by calling the CareLine at 1-800-662-7030

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, political beliefs, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

Please read carefully!

If you have questions, contact your county Department of Social Services.
A Serious Crime: Public Assistance Fraud

Some people do not give important information or do not tell the truth when applying for help through their county Department of Social Services.

Under North Carolina law, persons must give caseworkers all information needed to decide if they can receive benefits such as Work First Family Assistance, Food and Nutrition Services, Medicaid, Energy Assistance, Special and Emergency Assistance, and surplus commodities. Those who do not report correctly commit a crime.

The crime—public assistance fraud—is committed when people (1) get or try to get help by giving caseworkers false and incorrect information, or (2) do not give information.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A PERSON IS FOUND GUILTY OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FRAUD?
A person found guilty of public assistance fraud can be (1) fined, (2) placed in jail, or (3) fined and placed in jail.

People guilty of Food and Nutrition Services fraud may get an even stiffer penalty. That penalty could include all of the above, and you may not be allowed to get Food and Nutrition Services for:
- 1st offense - 1 year.
- 2nd offense - 2 years.
- 3rd offense - permanently.
- 1st time court finding of purchasing illegal drugs with Food and Nutrition Services - 2 years.
- Misrepresenting identity or residence to get Food and Nutrition Services in more than one place - 10 years.

WHAT CAN I DO?
If you think someone is not being truthful with your county Department of Social Services, contact the local office. You may also call the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services through its CARE-LINE at 1-800-662-7030, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. The call is toll-free.

To make sure you do not commit public assistance fraud, answer these questions.

1. Have you told your caseworker about all the money you receive for yourself or your children?

   YES NO
   a. your job, full-time
   b. your child's job
   c. your family
   d. your friends
   e. child's father
   f. roomers/boarders
   g. Social Security
   h. Workman's Compensation
   i. military allotment
   j. V.A. benefits
   k. disability
   l. unemployment
   m. savings, checking account
   n. lump sum payments from Social Security
   o. any other source

2. Have you told your caseworker about all the people living in your home?

   YES NO
   a. a husband
   b. a wife
   c. a child
   d. a friend
   e. any other relative
   f. any other person

3. Have you told your caseworker about all the property you have or gave away, property you are buying and selling?

   YES NO
   a. a home
   b. lifetime rights to property
   c. all cars
   d. stocks, bonds
   e. farmland and woodland
   f. any other person
   g. bank accounts

4. Have you told your caseworker about all insurance policies?

   YES NO
   a. life
   b. pre-burial contract
   c. hospital
   d. accident
   e. farmland and woodland
   f. any other type

5. Have you moved recently or do you plan to move? If yes, have you told your caseworker about your new address?

   YES NO

6. If you have a child older than 16 who does not go to school, have you reported this to your caseworker?

   YES NO

7. Have you told your caseworker the truth about the father or mother of your child(ren) and everything about his or her whereabouts?

   YES NO

If you answer "No" to any of the above questions, visit or call your caseworker immediately.

People suspected of committing public assistance fraud will be investigated without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, political beliefs, age or disability. If you think you have been discriminated against, write immediately USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.