

**Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Social Services
Virtual Meeting**

October 21, 2020

Attending: Ms. Lou Ali (Chair), Mr. Clyde Santana (Vice Chair), Mr. William Boone (Secretary), Ms. Mona Malik, Dr. Danny Avula, Mr. John Kines, and Dr. Andrew Heck.

Absent: MaryAnn Boyd and Kent Willis.

Also in Attendance: Mr. Duke Storen (Commissioner) and Ms. Ellen Malenke (Assistant Attorney General).

Meeting called to order at 10:00am – Ms. Ali

Review of Agenda – Karin Clark, Regulatory Coordinator

Comments from the Commissioner – Duke Storen

Commissioner Storen thanked everyone for participating in the virtual board meeting. He spoke about the on-going challenges and effects of the pandemic, racial injustice, and poverty. He thanked the leaders and workers of the social services system. He also thanked Dr. Avula, the public health leaders, officials, and staff. He provided local, state, and federal updates.

Child Support Enforcement Update – Craig Burshem and Barbara Lacina provided an update on Child Support Enforcement.

Child Care Update – Tara Ragland and Craig Burshem provided an update on the agency's response to COVID-19 challenges in child care settings and the upcoming transition of child care licensing functions from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Education.

Roadmap to End Hunger – Andrea Gregg and Eddie Oliver provided information on the Roadmap to End Hunger.

COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments from the public.

There were no comments from boards and directors of community action agencies.

Comment from the Virginia League of Social Service Executives – Andy Crawford, President Mr. Crawford spoke about the work the department is doing on SB1339 (2019), including the development of an MOU for locally administered, state supervised systems. The League is working with six workgroups within VDSS regarding the different levels of work and operations at the local level.

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Approved August 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Boone requested that the August minutes be amended to add the *Resolution to Request the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Social Services to Develop a New Funding Allocation Formula* document to the August 2020 minutes. **On Motion Duly Made**, (Mr. Boone), second (Mr. Kines), motion to approve the minutes as amended with all in favor.

Mr. Boone requested future resolutions approved by the Board be included in the minutes. **On Motion Duly Made**, (Mr. Kines), second (Ms. Malik), motion to add future resolutions to the minutes with all in favor.

2. **Benefit Programs Specialist Recognition Resolution**

On Motion Duly Made, (Mr. Boone), second (Mr. Santana), motion approved with all in favor.

3. **22VAC40-411, General Relief – Proposed Regulation (Pending OAG approval)**

Because the action is still under review by the Attorney General's office, it is postponed until December.

4. **2021 State Board of Social Services Meeting Schedule**

Members agreed to amend the schedule by changing the June 2021 meeting from a two-day meeting to a one-day meeting.

On Motion Duly Made, (Dr. Avula), second (Mr. Kines), motion to approve the schedule as amended with all in favor.

Board Member Requests for Future Information

Ms. Ali asked members for closing comments and suggestions for future meeting topics. Mr. Boone requested to hear how the plan is going for the revised funding formula.

Meeting adjourned at 12:11pm.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
*Benefit Programs Specialist Appreciation Month
Resolution of Appreciation***

WHEREAS, Virginia has provided a safety net to the most vulnerable citizens of the Commonwealth by administering the benefit programs of SNAP, TANF, Medical Assistance, General Relief, Auxiliary Grant, Refugee Cash Assistance and Energy Assistance by local department of social services; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's landmark welfare reform legislation and the present social economic climate in the United States and Virginia have significantly impacted the services provided by local Benefit Programs Specialists, calling upon them to creatively promote individual self-sufficiency and personal responsibility; and

WHEREAS, Virginia continues to experience unprecedented implementation of complex policies and procedures in all major benefit programs, as well as, adjusting to new processes of working remotely and relying on technology for processing cases and issuing benefits during a Public Health Emergency as essential employees; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's 3953 Benefit Programs Specialists (3450 Specialists, 463 Supervisors, and 40 Managers) have been at the forefront of public efforts to meet that need, steadily maintaining a high rate of application processing and case management to ensure that those qualified for social services receive and continue to receive them; and

WHEREAS, 38,897 TANF recipients and an additional \$3,397,940 in TANF Diversionary payments were issued to prevent long term dependence on public assistance, 773,719 SNAP recipients, 1,622,214 Medical Assistance recipients, 458 General Relief recipients, 3254 Auxiliary Grant recipients, 128,967 Energy Assistance households, and 4,781 children under 17 in Foster Care are served through the Benefit Programs Division, and depend on the dedication and commitment of Benefit Programs Specialists who handle their cases in an accurate and timely manner; and

WHEREAS, Benefit Programs Specialists are continually faced with reconciling an environment of rapidly changing policies, procedures, and technological advances with quality control requirements; and

WHEREAS, Benefit Programs Specialists provide ethical public service, respect human dignity, are responsible for the application of the law, demonstrate personal integrity and promote professional excellence;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 21st day of October 2020, the State Board of Social Services does hereby commend all Benefit Programs Specialists across the Commonwealth of Virginia for a job well done and recognizes the month of February 2021 as Benefit Programs Specialists Appreciation Month, calling upon Virginians to join in acknowledging their public service contributions.

Lou Brown Ali

*Ms. Lou Brown Ali, Chair,
State Board of Social Services
Commonwealth of Virginia*