



HUMAN SERVICES DELIVERY AND GOVERNANCE FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS – FALL 2012

**Is your county or region considering changing how it delivers or governs human services?
If so, would officials in your county or region appreciate assistance as they study their
options and develop a plan for moving forward?**

BACKGROUND

The General Assembly enacted legislation (S.L. 2012-126) that provides counties with an expanded list of options for how they deliver and govern some human services programs. In response to this legislation, counties may be considering one or more of the following:

- Having the county commissioners assume the duties of the board of health and/or board of social services.
- Creating a consolidated human services agency that (1) would be responsible for providing public health services, social services, and/or other human services and (2) would be governed by an appointed consolidated human services board.
- Creating a consolidated human services agency that (1) would be responsible for providing public health services, social services, and/or other human services and (2) would be governed by the board of county commissioners.
- Shifting from a single county health department to a district – or multi-county – health department that would be governed by a district board of health.
- Creating a public health authority that would be governed by a public health authority board.
- Other options for changing human service delivery, such as entering into interlocal agreements with neighboring counties for shared services or administrative responsibilities.
- Not making any changes to county human services agencies or governance structures.

County officials may want some assistance as they consider their options and possibly take steps toward change. The School of Government (SOG) received grant funding in 2011 that is dedicated in part to helping local governments evaluate their options (see www.ncphagencies.unc.edu for more information). We are committed to working with leaders from several counties or multi-county areas across the state in fall 2012 as they either begin or build upon local conversations about the possibility of changing their approaches to the delivery of some human services programs.

Our intent is to support participating counties' decision-making processes, not to recommend particular courses of action. Our plan is to make available subject matter experts who can provide information about a county's options, as well as trained facilitators who can help guide and support a county's internal discussions. We want to help each participating county find answers to pressing questions and, if appropriate, identify and map out the county's next steps.

We will be accepting requests for assistance in August and September. We will evaluate the requests and determine how many we can support with the resources that we have available. We may contact requesters for additional information during our evaluation process. If a county's request is accepted, one of our team members will contact the requester to set up an initial planning meeting.

COMMITMENT

In order for this work to be successful and useful to the county or counties involved, decision makers representing key stakeholder groups should commit to being involved in the discussion. The parties do not need to agree with one another, but they should be willing to engage in an honest and frank dialogue. For example, if a county is interested in discussing the creation of a consolidated human services agency, representatives of the board of county commissioners, county administration, public health, and social services should all be at the table together. If several counties are considering creating a district health department, representatives from the board of county commissioners, county administration, and public health in each county should be prepared to participate. If all of the relevant parties are not interested in participating in this type of group discussion, we ask that you not submit a request at this time.

PROCESS

Once our team accepts a county's request, we would expect each project to follow a unique path, but the general framework for the process will be as follows:

- **Planning meeting:** One or more members of the School of Government's team will visit the community to meet with representatives of the groups involved. The meeting will last about 2 hours. During this initial meeting, we will not discuss substantive issues related to human services. Rather, we will map out a plan for the facilitated discussions to follow. We will want to come away from this planning meeting with clear objectives and an agenda for the initial discussion. The requester must schedule the meeting, identify meeting space, invite the participants, and make any other necessary logistical arrangements. We are responsible for all travel and related expenses for School of Government team members. We may elect to hold this planning meeting by conference call rather than in person.
- **Facilitated discussion(s):** A School of Government facilitator, notetaker, and one or more subject matter experts (depending upon the needs identified in the planning meeting) will visit the community and facilitate 1–2 discussions with the representatives of the groups involved. We expect each discussion to last half of a day or approximately 3–4 hours. The requester must schedule the meeting(s), identify meeting space, invite the participants, and make any other necessary logistical arrangements. We are responsible for all travel and related expenses for School of Government team members and any office supplies or presentation materials required for the meeting. We will also pay for refreshments for the participants (one meal and beverages), although the requester will need to make catering arrangements.
- **Follow-up:** We will share summary notes with all of the participants after each discussion. Our goal is to provide a structure for productive conversation and to help the stakeholders involved agree upon next steps. Communities are responsible for continuing the conversation after the School of Government's involvement ends. If a community decides that a change in human services programs is needed, the community (not the School of Government) is responsible for making the plans for change and implementing those plans. If a community would like additional assistance from the School of Government after the discussion(s), we will work with the community to decide whether continuing the work would be useful and, if so, whether resources are available to support the continuation.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about this process or a pending request, please contact Aimee Wall at 919.843.4957 or wall@sog.unc.edu.

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Requests for Assistance

Deadline: Friday, September 21, 5 p.m.

PERSON SUBMITTING REQUEST

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

E-MAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

WHAT TYPE OF ASSISTANCE IS BEING REQUESTED? (please check all that apply)

- Informational: Discussion of all available options
- Discussion related to consolidated human services agencies
- Discussion related to multi-county district health departments
- Discussion related to single or multi-county public health authorities
- Discussion of the county commissioners assuming the role of a board of health and/or a social services board
- Other (please describe) _____

WE WOULD LIKE INFORMATION ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE IN THE PROCESS OF EVALUATING OR MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS.

- Have there been formal discussions within the county or region? YES NO
 - If YES, who has been involved in the discussion thus far?
 - Has there been conflict or tension in the discussions? What issues or concerns seem to be generating conflict or tension?
- Has the county or region taken any steps towards making a change? YES NO
 - If YES, what has happened so far?

WHAT WOULD NEED TO HAPPEN FOR YOU TO CONSIDER THE FACILITATED DISCUSSION A SUCCESS IN YOUR COUNTY OR REGION?

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

We would like representatives from all key stakeholder groups to indicate their commitment to participating in these discussions. The categories that should be represented vary depending upon the subjects to be discussed. Categories that should be represented are indicated with a check mark (✓) in the chart below. Representatives from the other categories are also welcome to participate. In addition, more than one person may attend from each category. We reserve the right, however, to limit the total number of participants to ensure a productive and useful discussion. If the request is for an informational session, please include representatives from each category or contact Aimee Wall at wall@sog.unc.edu or 919.843.4957 to discuss an alternative approach.

	Board of commissioners	County administration	Health department	Board of health	Department of social services	Board of social services
Consolidated human services agency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
District health department or multi-county public health authority	✓ (all potential partner counties)	✓ (all counties)	✓ (all counties)	✓ (all counties)		
Single county public health authority	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Board of commissioners assuming duties of board of health	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Board of commissioners assuming duties of DSS board	✓	✓			✓	✓

A person representing each category should sign this statement of commitment. If a category that should be represented has chosen not to participate, please explain why:

Please note that we may give preference to applications that include representatives from all appropriate categories.

By signing below, I affirm that I am committed to actively participating in the facilitated discussions about human services programs. If I am unable to attend, another appropriate representative will participate in my place.

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

NAME _____ TITLE _____

Submit applications via e-mail to ncphagencies@sog.unc.edu or via fax to 919.962.0654 (Attn: Aimee Wall) by 5 p.m. on September 21, 2012.