

2018 LGFCU Excellence in Innovation Award Project Evaluation

Project ID	GG-1
Title of Program	Economic Training Model
Program Category	
Submission Date	5/2/2018 1:56:06 PM
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Implementation Date	January 2017 - September 2017
FLSA Designation	Both (if applicable to a team)
Project Team Members	Carolyn Lewellen, Program Administrator, Jennifer McCarthur, IMC II; Adam Holland, Human Service Evaluator; Donald Taylor, IMC II; Jeff Wood, Program Integrity; Sandy Connor, Program Administrator; Denise Locklear, IMC III; Willette Jones, Supervisor

Description of Productivity Improvement

With the development of the training model, a new staff member is now oriented to the Department and trained to accurately and timely complete basic FNS applications and reviews in 37 days. Prior to the project, training took an average of 64 days. As staff do not have active caseloads nor work cases during training, others are given a higher caseload. Reducing the number of days to completely train a new staff member reduces the length of time seasoned staff work with increased caseloads. Providing for normal caseload sizes in a quicker time frame allows for processing and case review to be done more efficiently and more accurately. This project reduced increased caseloads for seasoned staff by 27 days.

Description of why this project was initiated

For many years the need for a consistent staff development and training method in economic services units has been needed. While new staff were trained, the training did not appear comprehensive, uniform, and was left to individual unit supervisors to complete. Further, no consistent timeline for training was being practiced. This did not provide for efficiency and, in turn, was not the most effective means of timely training for new staff members. The Department recognized reduced, consistent, and more efficient training for staff would improve customer service, increase productivity, and use county funding more efficiently. To provide for more consistency, the Department hosted a LEAN event, in 2017, facilitated by the Division. During the creation of the team, the Department identified internal resources, specifically, those staff who were emerging leaders and would benefit from an ongoing project to develop leadership skills and provide a much needed product for the agency. During the six month event, the LEAN team members developed and practiced countless leadership skills. For example, problem solving, critical thinking, conflict resolution, public speaking were all necessary to work together, keep others informed, and produce a finalized product. Team members also practiced Continuous Quality Improvement methods. As each piece of the product was completed and then piloted, feedback was solicited, and necessary changes made to the training format. To narrow the scope of the product the team first developed a model for training a new Food and Nutrition (FNS) staff member. Once a draft of the FNS training model was complete, new staff began to pilot the model. Staff were trained in policy, customer service, timeliness, accuracy, and comprehensively about the workings of the Department. Those on the team developed facilitation skills, improved critical thinking skills, had the opportunity to publically present progress, and practiced leading others. As the FNS piece of the project was finalized, each team member has now become the facilitator of a subcommittee to finalize the training model for the remaining economic programs.

Quantifiable results (sustainability, cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of service).

Indication of what resources were used and what was done with any accrued time savings

With the development of the training model, a new staff member is now oriented to the Department and trained to accurately and timely to complete basic FNS applications and reviews in 37 days. Prior to the project, training took an average of 64 days. By reducing training time and implementing consistent training methods, the Department can now reduce caseload sizes quicker, reduce wait time for clients, and improve accuracy of casework. Further county and reimbursed funds are used for casework, not training time. In FY 2017, 7 new economic staff were hired in the Department. Salary spent on training time was reduced by 27 days for a total of \$22,302 for these 7 positions compared to previous years. The model has clearly had an impact on multiple facets of the Department. This reallocation of resources will continue to serve the Department and Scotland County for many years to come.

Other descriptive information

The main objective for the team was to develop a consistent, uniform, and systemic training model in economic services to enhance new staff development. In addition to this objective, the Department also intended to identify emerging leaders and continue to grow and develop their leadership skills. New staff have provided positive feedback and ideas to adjust and improve the model. Seasoned staff and supervisors appreciate the uniform model, its comprehensiveness to include many areas of the agency, and the definitive timeline expected for training. The main obstacle during the project

was the time the team was away from their regular job duties during the Kaizen event and during the completion of the model. The team chose to allow flexibility in their schedules by having working lunch meetings. This again provided team members with the chance to practice time management and organizational skills that are essential for effective leaders. This also displayed their dedication to the process and product. As the LEAN team met their main objective and the agency also met the objective to ongoingly develop emerging leaders, the project was and continues to be a success.