

**North Carolina Association of County Commissioners  
2007-08 Ralph W. Ketner Employee Productivity Awards Application**

**County:** Halifax      **Employee:** Melody Beaver/Mistie Fisher      **Email:** Melody.beaver@ncmail.net Mistie.fisher@ncmail.net

**County Department:** DSS Child Support Enforcement      **Employee Title:** Child Support Program Manager/Unit Supervisor

**County Phone:** 252 536-2511      **County Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 767 Halifax, NC 27839

**Is this project being submitted on behalf of two or more employees?**      **NO**       **YES**

If yes, please provide below a listing of all project employees in Number 6. Employee & title as listed above should be for lead team member.

Fair Labors Standards Act Designation: In order for your project to be eligible, you MUST indicate one of the following. If you do not know, please contact your personnel director.

**EXEMPT:**       **NON-EXEMPT:**       **BOTH (if applicable to a team):**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Productivity Improvement Title:</b>	Introduction of Group Interviews Forum for non-custodial parents
<b>2.</b>	<b>Implementation Date (must be between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2008):</b>	September 14, 2007
<b>3.</b>	<b>Please describe the productivity improvement. (Please limit response to these 2 pages.)</b>	
	Since the implementation of this forum, Halifax Child Support staff has eradicated its backlog and is compliant with defined time frames. We are not only saving time and effort for our child support agents, derivative benefits have included observable time savings for both our staff attorney and Judges.	
	This results from child support agents resolving paternity and/or support matters administratively in our group meetings rather than proceeding with more costly court actions to obtain identical results. Bottom line is that we have saved time, effort, and money using this approach. Streamlining the process means families receive support faster. This project is the first in North Carolina Child Support history to use the group concept for non custodial parents and since we use approximately 45 minutes of a typical 70 minute interview to recite program objectives and techniques, the most efficient and consistent manner to do this is in a group forum. Following the Power Point presentation, we provide one-one-one conferences with parents to address case "particulars" and offer the parent an administrative option to resolve all issues. These sessions are scheduled Friday afternoons in consideration for the non custodial parent's work schedule.	

**4. Please describe why this project was initiated or what problem it addressed:**

Halifax County Child Support had a six month backlog for non custodial parent interviews due to multiple establishment unit vacancies. We realized that a streamlined mechanism assuring quality, timeliness and consistency in the interviews handled by our newly hired "rookie" child support agents was needed.

**5. Please quantify the improvement's results in terms of cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of services provided.**

*(Please indicate what resources were used to achieve your results, and what was done with the time savings, if any accrued).*

Within 90 days of implementation, our backlog was depleted. Non custodial parent participation increased by 65% and within six months from the start date, we successfully negotiated 108 Voluntary Support Agreements representing a 514% increase over the same time in 2006. We added \$23,486.00 to monthly obligations. In the sample six month period, 145 non custodial parents attended one of our 15 group sessions. Using this format, we saved 97.5 hours in interview time (which is 13 work days). Furthermore, by negotiating administrative orders, we saved 217.5 hours (29 work days) in court prep activities and actual hearing time. By negotiating 108 administrative orders we saved \$8,526.00 in court filing fees and most significantly, custodial parents received support payments more timely.

**6. Please provide any other descriptive information you would like to be considered by the review committee.**

We have partnered with other County agencies and community initiatives to better serve our families. We provide brochures and contact information for the Access and Visitation Program, the Halifax County Health Department, CADA's Fatherhood Initiative, CPTA, Health Choice, etc. Our focus is to provide non custodial parents with adequate information so that they can make informed and responsible decisions regarding the support of their children. This project can be duplicated inexpensively in other counties.

Project lead member: Melody M. Beaver, Child Support Program Manager; Project member: Mistie D. Fisher, Child Support Supervisor I

<b>County Manager's Name:</b>	Tony N. Brown, County manager	<b>Supervisor's Name:</b>	Michael G. Felt
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Return by **June 2, 2008** via email to [ncacc@ncacc.org](mailto:ncacc@ncacc.org).