

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION OF NORTH CAROLINA
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: July 20, 2006

TO: Regional, Local and Branch Office Managers

FROM: Manfred Emmrich, Director, Employment Services

SUBJECT: Health Check/NC Health Choice

For many years, the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina has played an important role in helping persons that are unemployed receive the resources they need to support themselves and to find new gainful employment as quickly as possible. As you know, along with loss of employment, families frequently lose their health insurance coverage. This can be especially devastating for families with children and teens.

I am pleased to announce a new partnership with the NC Division of Public Health and the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation who jointly promote the availability of free or low-cost health insurance for North Carolina's children. For families that qualify, Health Check (Medicaid)/NC Health Choice can help cover children's medical needs, including: Well-Child Checkups, Medicines, Sick Visits, Dental Care, Hospital Care, Lab Tests, Counseling, Therapies, Surgeries, Medical Equipment & Supplies, Immunizations, and Vision & Hearing Care.

Health Check (the Medicaid Program for Children) and NC Health Choice are free or low cost health insurance programs that cover children up to age 19 (or 21 in some cases). Whether children qualify for Health Check or NC Health Choice is dependent upon family income. Even children who are members of a family of four which earns \$40,008 or less per year, or a family of five earning less that \$46,801 per year may qualify. The program also covers children living with grandparents, other family members or friends.

Information about our State's child health insurance program is now accessible through our web site <http://www.ncesc.com/> by clicking on "Individual Services," then "Other Resources," then "health," then "Child Health Insurance - Health Check/NC Health Choice." This will take you to the NC Healthy Start Foundation web site at <http://www.nchealthystart.org/public/childhealth/index.htm>. At this web site, applicants can check benefits, eligibility requirements and download an application form. To apply, they should complete the form and mail it to the local Department of Social Services (DSS) in their county of residence. The DSS will determine whether they qualify and will follow-up to assist them in obtaining coverage.

Our outreach effort will begin in the Raleigh and Greensboro local offices. The goal is to integrate the child health insurance message as seamlessly and effortlessly as possible. Meanwhile, an initial supply of posters in English and Spanish will be sent to all local offices in the next few days. The posters include the NC Family Health Resource Line

toll-free number (1-800-367-2229) where families can call to learn about Health Check/NC Health Choice and request an application by mail. This is a bilingual line that operates Monday – Friday from 8am-5pm. By early fall, we will share what we have learned in Raleigh and Greensboro and will begin distributing outreach materials that can be used in all local and branch offices.

To view a PowerPoint presentation about Health Check/NC Health Choice, visit the site <http://www.nchealthystart.org/outreach/prognews/powerpt.htm/>. Should you have questions or comments please contact Diane G. Smith, Manager, Applicant Services at (919) 733-4896 or email diane.g.smith@ncmail.net.