



# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Department of Social Services  
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## **Social Services Wins Two Best Practice Awards**

FAYETTEVILLE – The Cumberland County Department of Social Services received two Best Practice Awards at the Social Services Institute in Hickory on Oct. 24. It is the fifth straight year the county’s DSS has won Best Practice Awards at the annual institute.

The department’s Customer Service Center in the Economic Services Section won the “Best Practice Award for Empowering Clients to Self-Sufficiency” from the N.C. Association of County Directors of Social Services. The Customer Service Center was established in October 2012 to streamline the process for customers coming in to apply for Food and Nutrition Services benefits. Through the center, customers can complete an online application through ePass, the Internet-based program that provides information about benefits and services.

Cumberland County won out over seven other counties nominated for the award, which recognizes programs or policy changes that help facilitate social services clients’ journeys toward living independently. The Best Practice Awards were designed by North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services to showcase innovative, successful and unique programs within county departments of social services and to share that information with other counties and the public.

The Cumberland County chapter of the North Carolina Social Services Association received the “Best Practice Award for Leadership Development” for a series of presentations by various community leaders, including Fort Bragg unit commanders, business owners, Social Services Board and Fayetteville City Council members. The leaders were invited to share their experiences and expertise with the agency’s management team and staff. The county’s NCSSA chapter has 74 DSS employees including all of the management team. The Best Practice awards are designed to encourage creativity and leadership among the association’s members and recognize local chapters and counties that excel in these areas.

“I am proud of the efforts of our employees, management and NCSSA members for their cutting-edge approach in the fulfillment of our mission and vision through innovation, creativity and customer focus,” said DSS Director Brenda Reid Jackson.

The Department of Social Services is located at 1225 Ramsey St. The main phone numbers is 323-1540 and the agency can be visited online at [www.co.cumberland.nc.us/social\\_services.aspx](http://www.co.cumberland.nc.us/social_services.aspx).

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