

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2013**

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**HOUSE BILL 392  
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/3/13**

Short Title: Share Arrest Warrant Status/Pub. Assistance.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 21, 2013

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT REQUIRING A COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DSS) TO  
2 CONDUCT A CRIMINAL CHECK ON APPLICANTS FOR OR RECIPIENTS OF  
3 TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILY (TANF) BENEFITS OR FOOD  
4 AND NUTRITION SERVICES (FNS) BENEFITS, TO REQUIRE DSS TO SHARE  
5 INFORMATION WITH A LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY REGARDING AN  
6 APPLICANT FOR OR RECIPIENT OF TANF OR FNS BENEFITS WHO HAS AN  
7 OUTSTANDING ARREST WARRANT, AND TO DENY TANF OR FNS BENEFITS  
8 TO AN APPLICANT OR RECIPIENT SUBJECT TO AN OUTSTANDING WARRANT  
9 FOR A FELONY OR FOR A PROBATION OR PAROLE VIOLATION.  
10

11 Whereas, federal law, specifically, 42 U.S.C. § 601, et seq., requires that states  
12 receiving funds under certain federal grant programs shall not use any part of the grant to  
13 provide assistance to any individual who is (i) fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or  
14 confinement after conviction, under the laws of the place from which the individual flees, for a  
15 crime, or an attempt to commit a crime, which is a felony under the laws of the place from  
16 which the individual flees or (ii) violating a condition of probation or parole imposed under  
17 federal or State law; and

18 Whereas, states receiving these federal grant funds are authorized under federal law  
19 to establish safeguards against the use or disclosure of information about applicants or  
20 recipients for assistance under the state program funded under federal law; and

21 Whereas, federal law expressly authorizes the State agency administering the  
22 program to furnish a federal, State, or local law enforcement officer, upon the request of the  
23 officer, with the current address of any recipient if the officer furnishes the agency with the  
24 name of the applicant or recipient under specified circumstances; and

25 Whereas, conducting a criminal background check on applicants for or recipients of  
26 public assistance benefits is necessary in order to ensure compliance with federal laws  
27 prohibiting a fleeing felon or probation or parole violator from receiving public assistance  
28 benefits; and

29 Whereas, the apprehension of individuals by law enforcement may be necessary to  
30 protect and safeguard the public; and

31 Whereas, State agencies administering the program may have or receive information  
32 that is necessary for a law enforcement agency to conduct the official duties of the agency, and  
33 the location or apprehension of the applicant or recipient is within a law enforcement agency's  
34 official duties; Now, therefore,

35 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:



1           SECTION 1. Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 108A of the General Statutes is  
2 amended by adding the following new section to read:

3 **"§ 108A-26.1. Information sharing of outstanding arrest warrant of applicant for or**  
4 **recipient of program assistance.**

5       (a) A county department of social services shall notify an applicant for program  
6 assistance under Part 2 or Part 5 of this Article that release of confidential information from the  
7 applicant's records may not be protected if a warrant for arrest is issued against the applicant. A  
8 county department of social services shall notify all recipients under a program of public  
9 assistance under Part 2 or Part 5 of this Article at the time of renewal of the recipient's  
10 application for such program assistance that release of confidential information from the  
11 recipient's records may not be protected if a felony or misdemeanor arrest warrant is issued  
12 against the recipient.

13       (b) Notwithstanding G.S. 108A-80, and to the extent otherwise allowed by federal and  
14 State law, a county department of social services shall conduct a criminal history record check  
15 of an applicant for or recipient of program assistance under Part 2 or Part 5 of this Article. The  
16 county department of social services shall ensure that the State and national criminal history of  
17 an applicant, or of a recipient at the time of benefits renewal, is checked. If an applicant or  
18 recipient's criminal history record check reveals that a warrant has been issued for the arrest of  
19 the applicant or recipient for the commission of a felony or a misdemeanor, or for a probation  
20 or parole violation, the county department of social services shall, as soon as practicable, but  
21 within 72 hours after receiving information of the existence of the warrant for arrest, notify a  
22 local law enforcement agency in the county where the applicant or recipient is seeking benefits  
23 of the existence of the warrant for arrest. Information that may be released pursuant to this  
24 section shall be limited to the name, address, telephone number, Social Security number, birth  
25 date, and physical description of the applicant for or recipient of program assistance. Except as  
26 otherwise provided by this section, the county department of social services shall keep all  
27 information obtained pursuant to this section confidential.

28       (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize the disclosure of any  
29 information otherwise protected by State or federal law or regulation.

30       (d) This section applies to applicants for or recipients of program assistance under Part  
31 2 or Part 5 of this Article only.

32       (e) The Social Services Commission shall adopt rules regarding (i) the sharing of  
33 information between county departments of social services and local law enforcement agencies,  
34 (ii) the accuracy of information shared pursuant to this section, and (iii) any other rules the  
35 Commission deems necessary to implement this section. The Secretary of the Department of  
36 Health and Human Services shall oversee implementation of these rules.

37       (f) Each county department of social services is authorized to enter into a  
38 Memorandum of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the head of any law  
39 enforcement agency as defined in G.S. 90-95.2 in order to perform the functions described in  
40 this section.

41       (g) Annually, on April 1, each county department of social services shall report to the  
42 Department of Health and Human Services on the number of individuals who are denied  
43 benefits under this section and the number of referrals made to law enforcement agencies under  
44 this section during the preceding calendar year.

45       (h) Annually, on May 1, the Department of Health and Human Services shall report to  
46 the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services of the General  
47 Assembly on the number of individuals who are denied assistance under this section and the  
48 number of referrals made by county departments of social services to law enforcement agencies  
49 under this section. The report shall include a breakdown by county."

50           SECTION 2. Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 108A of the General Statutes is  
51 amended by adding the following new section to read:

1 **"§ 108A-26.2. Individual subject to felony charge; eligibility for program assistance;**  
2 **federal approval; review by department.**

3 (a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, a department of social services shall not  
4 grant public assistance under Part 2 or Part 5 of Article 2 of Chapter 108A of the General  
5 Statutes if the department receives information described in G.S. 108A-26.1 that the applicant  
6 for or recipient of program assistance is subject to arrest under an outstanding warrant arising  
7 from a charge of violating conditions of parole or probation or from a felony charge against that  
8 applicant or recipient in any jurisdiction. This section does not affect the eligibility for  
9 assistance of other members of the applicant's or recipient's household. An applicant or  
10 recipient described in this section is eligible for program assistance, if all other eligibility  
11 criteria of the law are met, when the applicant or recipient is no longer subject to arrest under  
12 an outstanding warrant as described in this section.

13 (b) If federal approval is required in order to prevent the loss of federal reimbursement  
14 as a result of the application of this section to an applicant for or recipient of program  
15 assistance, the department of social services shall promptly take any action necessary to obtain  
16 federal approval."

17 **SECTION 3.** Part 2 of Article 4 of Chapter 114 of the General Statutes is amended  
18 by adding the following new section to read:

19 **"§ 114-19.33. Criminal record checks of applicants for or recipients of program**  
20 **assistance.**

21 The Department of Justice may provide to a county department of social services from the  
22 State and National Repositories of Criminal Histories the criminal history of any person who  
23 applies for program assistance under Part 2 or Part 5 of Article 2 of Chapter 108A of the  
24 General Statutes. The county department of social services shall provide to the Department of  
25 Justice, along with the request, a form signed by the applicant or recipient acknowledging  
26 receipt of the notification required by G.S. 108A-26.1(a) and any identifying information  
27 required by the State and National Repositories and any additional information required by the  
28 Department of Justice. Except as provided under G.S. 108A-26.1, the county department of  
29 social services shall keep all information obtained pursuant to this section confidential."

30 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.