

Henderson County Board of Social Services  
January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

The Henderson County Board of Social Services meeting was called to order by Chair Simpson at 12:01 pm

Board Members Present	Josh Simpson, Chair Melinda Lowrance, Member Amy Holt, Member Jerrie McFalls, Member
Staff Leadership Present	Lorie Horne, Social Services Director Debra Dunn, Deputy Director Melissa Novack, Administrative Officer Kandi Bridges, Interim Economic Services Administrator Candice Fowler, Administrative Assistant Libby Myers, Social Work Program Manager
Guest	Mary Kay Krokowski, League of Women Voters

B. Public Input

None

C. Adjustments to the Agenda

Chair Simpson stated that we are cancelling the closed session.

D. Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Lowrance moved to approve the December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Mrs. McFalls seconded, the December meeting minutes were approved.

E. Board Education: Child and Family Specialty Plans

Ms. Myers discussed child and family specialty plans that have been moved from Vaya to Healthy Blue. The transfer has not been a seamless process, but we are working to get the issues worked out and ensure care plans are followed. Chair Simpson asked if things will be better once the issues are worked out. Ms. Myers stated that she is hopeful that this partnership will work out, they want to have monthly meetings with the agency and since they are part of Blue Cross Blue Shield they may have more connections. Mrs. McFalls asked what Vaya is doing now. Ms. Myers stated that we have a few kids that stayed with Vaya, Healthy Blue did not take clients with innovations' waivers.

F. Reports

**Director's Monthly Report (Attachment I)**

Mrs. McFalls asked about foster care funding as it relates to recent Federal guidance around social security benefits for children in foster care. Mrs. Horne stated that we received information in a "Dear County Director" letter, but we have not received guidance yet. Mrs. Horne stated that SSI funds go toward cost of care. Mrs. McFalls asked about the cost-of-living increase to social security beneficiaries. Mrs. Bridges stated that typically they do that in NCFast. Mrs. McFalls stated that some clients get the increase and become ineligible for other benefits.

Mrs. Lowrance asked if they would start funding the mobile treatments in Henderson County. Director Horne stated that we don't know for certain, but there is a need in this area; however, there are no current plans for that program at this time.

**January Program Administrator's Report (Attachment IV)**  
None

**December 2024- December 2025 Statistical Report (Attachment III)**  
None

H. Financial Report December 2025 (Attachment V)  
None

I. Old Business

**DSS Staffing Update**

Director Horne stated that we have currently have 10 vacancies. We have one social work position starting 1/26/2026 and two candidates are in the pre-employment stage. Three of the 10 positions are auxiliary positions. Mrs. Lowrance asked if we encourage new hires to pursue higher education if they start with a high school diploma. Director Horne stated that we offer education assistance and we make everyone aware of that every year and during orientation.

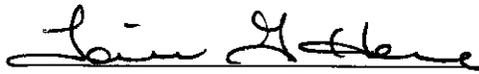
J. Adjournment

Chair Simpson made a motion to adjourn; Mrs. Lowrance seconded the motion. Chair Simpson adjourned the meeting at 12:55pm.

 2/17/26

Josh Simpson, Chair

Date

 2-17-26

Lorie Horne, Secretary to the Board

Date

Attachments:

- I. Director's Report –January 2026
- II. January Employees of the Month
- III. Statistical Report – December 2025
- IV. Program Administrators' Report –January 2026
- V. Financial Report – November 2025
- VI. 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Personnel Report