

PLEASE READ BEFORE COMPLETING APPLICATION AND KEEP FOR YOUR REFERENCE



Dear First In Families Applicant:

Thank you for your recent interest in First In Families (FIF). Enclosed is an application for you to complete and return to our office. If you have any questions or need help with the information requested please call the number on the application form. Please be as specific as possible regarding your need for assistance and include supporting documentation.

Once we receive your application a FIF Staff person will contact you to follow up on any missing information and to discuss your need. She or he may also need to discuss your (or your family member's) disability. You may be asked to send additional information regarding the disability to determine whether or not you are eligible for FIF.

To be eligible for FIF you must:

- (1) Live in Mecklenburg county;
- (2) Your household income should not exceed \$65,000 after taxes, and;
- (3) Have a family member with a:
 - developmental disability **or**
 - traumatic brain injury **or**
 - severe mental illness **or** *Effective 4/2/07*
 - severe persistent mental illness *Effective 4/2/07*

FIF uses the NC statute 122-C-3(12a) to define developmental disability. A copy of this statute can be supplied for you if you wish. Here are some examples of developmental disability: Mental Retardation, Autism (Autism Spectrum Disorder), Cerebral Palsy, Downs Syndrome, and Traumatic Brain Injury. If you are unsure if your disability falls under this definition, please contact FIF the number enclosed.

Only one application per household is permitted (individuals living in licensed group care situations are not eligible for cash assistance).

Once eligibility is determined the FIF staff will work with you to clearly identify your need and find the sources for assistance. The goal of FIF is to help you find what you need within the community and link you or your family member to those resources. This creates a partnership involving you, FIF, and community agencies and individuals all working together to meet your requested need. **Keep in mind that FIF is not a "charity" program and certain restrictions may apply depending on the funding source. The goal is to link you to resources in the community and help you find long-term solutions so that you and your family realize your dreams for the future. You may, in turn, have goods and services you can contribute. This is strongly encouraged, because in the end, everyone is pitching in to help and the entire community is stronger.**

Turn-around time from receiving your application to meeting your need may take 30 to 60 days, but FIF will work hard to shorten that time. We recognize that families' needs change and we try to be responsive to that fact. Special, critical situations that arise will be considered on an individual basis by the Management Team.

We hope this helps you better understand the FIF program. If you have questions please call the Cindy Carroll at (704) 536-6661 x 437.