

Facts About The Welfare Department

(This is the fourth in a series of articles on public welfare in Hoke County. The second and third articles explained two of the three monthly financial aid programs administered by the Hoke County Department of Public Welfare - Aid to the Aged and Aid to the Disabled. Today's article will present the facts about the third monthly financial aid program - Aid to Families with Dependent Children.)

The financial aid to Families with Dependent Children program is a program designed by Congress to assist needy children. However, it would be of little service to help the children and let the parent be without subsistence. Therefore, in these cases one adult family member normally is included in the monthly grant.

It is a program to help only needy children who have been deprived of parental care and support because of death, physical or mental incapacity, or continued absence from the home of one or both parents either natural or adoptive.

There is no program of financial assistance in North Carolina for families where there are two able-bodied parents. Some states do have an optional program to allow assistance where both the father and mother are in the home but unemployed. This State has not chosen to implement this program. The vast majority of these cases involve a mother and her children. In some cases a grandmother or other relative has assumed the responsibility for providing parental care and support for the children and would be eligible under these circumstances.

This program like the two other financial aid programs is a Federal program which is financed with approximately 70 percent Federal funds. The remainder is appropriated from State and county funds.

There are eligibility requirements other than the need for support due to being deprived of parental care by one or both parents. The child must be under 18 years of age or between 18 and 21 years and attending school. If the child is between 16 and 18 years of age, he must be enrolled and regularly attending school. If he is not in school and is mentally and physically able to work, he

must be employed if a job is available.

The parent must be registered for employment and accept a bona fide job offer unless she is mentally or physically unable to work, needed in the home for continuous care of the children, or there is no gainful employment available. In cases where a parent abandoned the children, the applicant must agree to institute criminal non-support action against the deserting parent or parents.

When families apply for this assistance at the Hoke County Welfare Department, a welfare worker will help prepare a budget for them using the standard budget allowances established by the State Board of Public Welfare. Local welfare departments cannot allow amounts above these maximum allowances. The budget allowances for basic necessities of living are on a scale that reduces the amount allowed per person as the number in the family increases.

The maximum monthly allowance for one person is \$35.50 for necessities which include food, clothing, medicine chest supplies, household supplies, household equipment, and personal expenses. For a family of four the total allowance for these items would be \$90.00 and for a family of seven \$123.50. The food allowance included in this amount for a family of four averages 19 cents per meal per person.

The actual cost of rent or home ownership and all utilities is allowed up to a maximum of \$60.00 per month. An amount up to \$10.00 per month for incidental medical expense is allowed. Certain school allowances are allowed such as \$3.50 a month for each child attending public school and the actual cost of special school fees.

This means the approximate maximum allowance a mother and three children could receive per month would be \$170.50. If they have any other income, most of it is deducted from this amount and if their income is more than this amount, they would be ineligible.

These budget allowances have increased very little since 1952. The State Board of Public Welfare, realizing that they are inadequate, has

requested funds to raise the basic necessities 20 percent and the shelter and utilities from \$60.00 to \$65.00 per month.

Each person receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children is also provided with medical care. The family is given an identification card and this entitles them to inpatient and outpatient hospital care, physicians fees, and prescription drugs. They must pay the first \$1.00 cost of each prescription drug.

Periodic reviews by the local welfare staff are conducted to determine if recipients of this service are still eligible. They have the responsibility of reporting any change on a sample of cases by staff of the State Welfare Department. Last year less than one percent of these cases were found ineligible.

At present there are 425 people, or 84 families, receiving monthly Aid to Families with Dependent Children in Hoke County. The average monthly payment per person is \$22.50. There were 106,727 persons in the State receiving this assistance the past fiscal year.

The extent to which AFDC is a program caring for illegitimate children is commonly exaggerated. The great majority of illegitimate children born in North Carolina do not receive this kind of assistance. Over the past 18 years, 183,248 illegitimate children have been born in this State; of this number, only 15,400 (approximately 8.4 percent) are currently receiving AFDC.

Another common misconception is that once a woman becomes a recipient of AFDC, she continues to have children in order to get additional welfare benefits. State statistics indicate that only 3.4 percent of the children currently receiving AFDC were born after the mother became eligible for assistance. Moreover, a mother with two or three small children who has another child receives only pennies a day because of the additional child.

Any applicant or recipient who feels that the local welfare department has acted improperly in regard to a decision made on his case may appeal to the State Board of Allotments and Appeal. If he is not satisfied with this board's decision, he may take his case to Superior court for judicial review.



SENIOR CITIZENS' Golden Age Club of Cameron Heights. Some of the members are shown here at a meeting last Tuesday morning where *The Beauty of Flowers* provided both the topic and the decor of the get-together. Group coordinator Kate Blue Covington, at the far left, served refreshments. The club meets once every month for singing, socializing, and the discussion of inspirational topics.

Jaycees Hold Workshop Here

On May 28th the Raeford Jaycees were hosts for the Jaycee Area Leadership workshop. Those clubs participating in this workshop were: Fayetteville, Cape Fear, Raeford, Red Springs, Stedman, St. Pauls, and

Elizabethtown.

The guest speaker was Jim Ollis, state president, from Laurinburg. Other guests were Mac Ausbon, National Director, from Southern Pines, and Charles Gainey, State Vice

President, from Stedman.

The president said, "It is the opinion of all concerned that with the leadership of the North Carolina Jaycees and our particular area we can hardly help having the best Jaycee

year in history."

In President Jim's closing remarks he admonished the leaders from Area B not be satisfied with anything less than success, and to strive in every way to be a winner.

Post-Korean GI Bill Anniversary

The third anniversary of the Post-Korean G. I. Bill Education and Training program will be June 1.

"During the past three years more than 1,148,000 veterans and 83,000 servicemen nationwide entered training under this program," W. R. Phillips, Manager of the Winston-Salem Veterans Administration Regional Office, said.

In North Carolina, more than 19,685 veterans and 1,860 servicemen entered training during the past three years.

To be eligible for Post-Korean GI Bill education and training assistance from the VA, a veteran must have had at least 181 days of service, part of which was after January 31, 1955, and not have received a dishonorable discharge, Phillips said.

He urged all veterans interested in Post-Korean GI Bill education and training to contact the Winston-Salem VA Regional Office. He reminded Post-Korean and Viet Nam era veterans in North Carolina that they must complete their training by May 31, 1974, or eight years after separation from service, whichever is later.

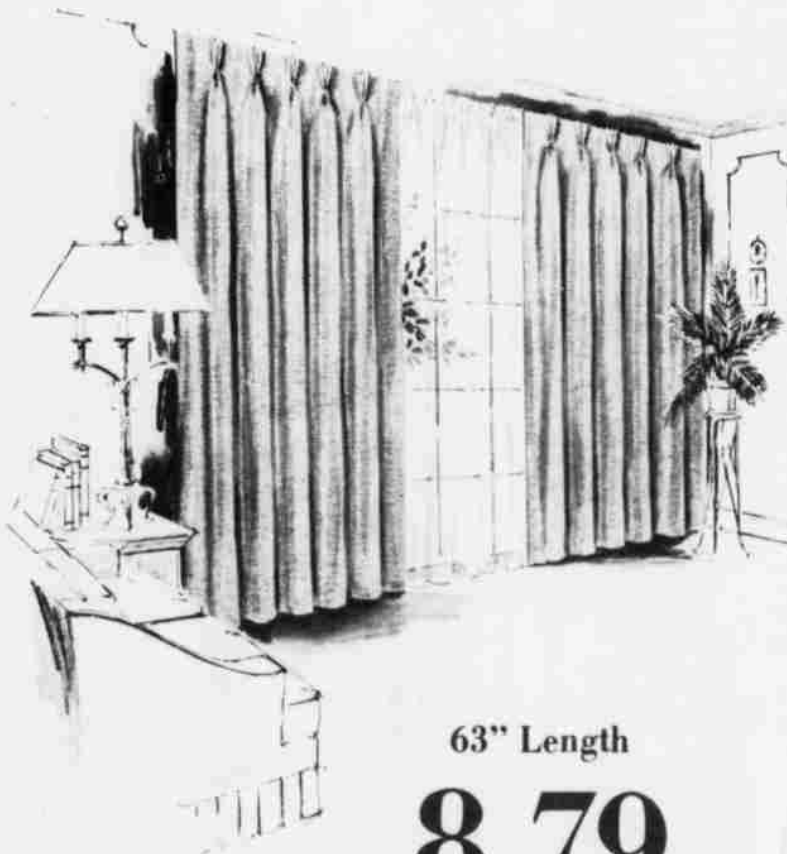
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