

## **SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MEETING**

April 21, 2026 Draft Minutes

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm CT

Kneip Building, 1st Floor, DSS Conference Room

700 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501

**Board Members Present:** Colleen Winter, Howard Grinager, Stacy Tieszen, Elton Blemaster, and Karen Michels.

**DSS Staff Present:** Matt Althoff, Cabinet Secretary; Brenda Tidball-Zeltinger, Deputy Secretary and Chief of Operations; Steve Rasmussen, Chief Financial Officer, Tiffany Wolfgang, Chief of Children and Family Services; Jeremy Lippert, Director of Legal Services; Brenna Koedam, Chief of Behavioral Health; Emily Richardt, Director of Communications & Administrative Services; Tracy Mercer-O’Daniel, Special Projects Coordinator.

**Public/Media Present:** Jackson Dircks, SDPB; Makenzie Huber, SD Searchlight; Bob Mercer, Kelo.

**Adoption of Agenda and Minutes** – Board approved the agenda and adopted the minutes from the October 21, 2025, meeting.

### **FY27 Legislation Impacting DSS: Implementation Plans**

Althoff introduced Steve Rasmussen to the Board. Rasmussen shared his background and some impacts of FY27 legislation including a 1.4% provider inflation and increases to ongoing budget.

- Ongoing Budget Increases:
  - Cost coverage for Critical Access Hospitals as methodology modernization progresses.
  - Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) rebasement.
  - TANF benefit increase of 5%

Grinager asked about Critical Access Hospitals. Althoff explained that it is a federal designation and that South Dakota has 39 Critical Access Hospitals. He added that the designation carries Medicaid-related benefits. Tieszen asked what the previous TANF decrease was. Althoff stated it was 10%.

- Legislative Updates:

- HB 1006: Indian Managed Care Task Force.

Althoff explained that the plan is to contract with a provider for a set payment based on a defined population, with the goal of launching in 2028 and ensuring representation from all nine tribes.

- HB 1028/1029: Licensure Compacts and Title Act

Tidball-Zeltinger reported that HB 1028 granted statutory authority to the Board of Social Work Examiners to complete required background checks for individuals participating in the national compact. She further explained that HB 1029 provided the Board of Addiction and Prevention Professionals with rule-making authority to establish career pathways addiction, prevention, and peer support professionals. Koedam added that peer supports are vital due to their lived experience and noted excitement about establishing a credentialing pathway.

- HB 1040/1045: Child Support Commission bills.

Althoff explained that the Child Support Commission is driven by the purpose of making sure the payment schedule is economically accurate. One of the requirements is to have an economist give their perspective. Since 1040 failed the schedule will not be updated. Grinager asked if it would be brought back to legislature. Althoff replied that you have to stay up with the costs. The next time the gap will be bigger. Michels asked if four years too long of time for the commission to meet again. Althoff explained that it is federally driven.

- HB 1044: Rural Health Transformation initiatives, including:

- Rural Strong Grants
- PACT
- Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC)

Althoff provided updates on HR1, noting that it includes a one-time investment in rural health care. South Dakota was awarded \$189 million over five years. Tieszen asked whether the funding supports only medical services. Althoff responded that addiction and mental health services are included.

Koedam described how CCBHCs will improve access to care and provide crisis services, noting that 13 providers are participating in the CCBHC cohorts. Althoff added that CCBHCs will help close existing service gaps. Tieszen stated that maintaining competent staff remains a concern, especially in rural areas. Wolfgang noted that peer supports help address this challenge.

- HB 1056: SNAP Food Waiver.

Althoff explained that the department will meet the September 1st filing deadline and noted that they are looking at incentivizing other things. Grinage asked if the grocery stores were resistant to the ban of soft drinks and other items. Althoff said yes, it most likely would have required a major change to their POS systems. We are looking for a technology pathway.

- HB 1187: Amendment to Mandatory Reporters list (child abuse).

Wolfgang said this added coaches to the mandatory reporter list and that the South Dakota Activities Association helped with wording to include those who are not school employees. Blemaster suggested talking to the American Legion to include baseball coaches.

- HB 1250: Updates to Medicaid provider methodology review schedule.

Althoff explained this is an amendment codifying Medicaid providers. It is scheduled for review every five years and the intent is to treat everyone similarly.

- Letters of Intent issued to the Department by the Joint Committee on Appropriations were discussed. The new letters issued during the 2026 Session relate to the following programs in DSS.
  - TANF
  - Medicaid discretionary inflation
  - Opioid settlement funding

### **Opioid Settlement**

Althoff provided an overview of FY26 major grants, including full lifecycle from award to implementation. He noted that the Opioid Advisory Committee will help with strategic planning. He also clarified the committee's role in oversight and recommendations.

### **Federal Legislative Updates**

- **SNAP:** Potential eligibility and funding changes discussed.
- **Medicaid:** Updates on Community Engagement requirements.

### **A Home for Every Child – CFSR PIP**

- An update was provided on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP).
- Ongoing efforts and progress toward compliance and outcomes were discussed.

**Public Comments**

No comments were received from audience participants.

**DSS Board Business**

- Discussion on board member term completions and term limits.
- Considerations and planning for FY27 board composition and priorities.

**Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.