



MECKLENBURG COUNTY
County Manager's Office

June 1, 2026

Dear Members of the House Oversight Committee,

Thank you for your leadership in attempting to improve North Carolina's child welfare system. The death of six-year-old Dominique Moody is a heartbreaking tragedy. As County Manager, hearing of the situation left me speechless. I will never understand how an adult can abuse a child.

As County Manager, when I learned of the situation, I immediately directed a comprehensive internal review to better understand the facts, identify any breakdowns in practice, policy, or decision-making, and determine what corrective actions might be necessary. Staff conducted a thorough examination to understand what occurred and, most importantly, what measures might be put in place to help ensure that a tragedy of this nature to the extent possible doesn't happen again. I also asked for an employee investigation conducted by HR for accountability and appropriate disciplinary actions. That information has been provided to the Committee. While we cannot change the outcome for Dominique, we have an obligation to learn from this case and strengthen the systems entrusted with protecting vulnerable children. That commitment remains my highest priority.

I want to assure this Committee that Mecklenburg County remains fully committed to working collaboratively with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, state leaders, and our community partners to improve our child welfare system. We welcome the partnership of accountability, transparency, and constructive recommendations that will help us better serve children and families. At the same time, as you are aware there is a criminal case pending and a court order regarding public disclosure of case specific information.

Our system is far from perfect, but we have greatly improved our practices from within and in a sustainable manner. Our effort to assess our practice and make improvements began well in advance of the state's review. My commitment to this work has been operationalized through the new fiscal year county budget by my recommendation to add several new DSS positions which recommendation is

PEOPLE • PRIDE • PROGRESS • PARTNERSHIPS

600 East Fourth Street • Charlotte, North Carolina 28202-2835 • (704) 336-2472 Fax (704) 336-5887
www.MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

expected to be approved by my Board at our June 2 meeting. My Board recognizes the gravity of this work. The budget adds staff and support, as well as resiliency support for those on the front lines of this work whose job is to investigate the brutality experienced by children. This work is grueling and takes an emotional toll on the workers who daily have to confront the horrific conditions that some children face. While there were changes to the staff, the collective team remains dedicated to our vulnerable children.

Your letter included tough statements, but I understand the need for those words to be stated. I know it comes from a place of deep care for the vulnerable children of North Carolina, a sentiment that I likewise share. As I wrap up my first year as the Mecklenburg County Manager, I assure you it is my intent to implement changes that will have a positive impact on the process in the future. I cannot answer why some people do what they do and harm children. I can only try to make sure that Mecklenburg is prepared to respond appropriately in whatever the situation is. I commit to you that we will remain focused on that responsibility.

Please see attached the answers to your questions.

Sincerely,

Mike Bryant

Questions & Answers
Mecklenburg County Manager

1. When did Mecklenburg County leadership first learn of reports, complaints, or concerns involving Dominique Moody?

Mecklenburg County's Child Family and Adult Services (CFAS) leadership first learned of the concerns following the fatality on 12-16-25, which resulted in a Child Protective Services Investigations report.

2. When did Mecklenburg County leadership first learn that Mecklenburg County DSS had received prior reports involving this family?

Mecklenburg County CFAS leadership learned of prior reports following the fatality on 12-16-25, which resulted in a Child Protective Services Investigations report.

3. When did Mecklenburg County leadership first learn that four out of five screened-out reports involving this family met the definition of abuse or neglect?

Mecklenburg County CFAS leadership learned of prior screen out reports following the fatality on 12-16-25, which resulted in a Child Protective Services Investigations report.

4. Who in county leadership was notified after Dominique Moody's death?

The first leadership notification was to former County CFAS director Kim Henderson.

5. What action did the County Manager's Office take after Dominique Moody's death?

Immediately following the fatality, The County Manager's Office requested a comprehensive case review, followed by a series of meetings with all staff involved in the case.

6. Has any employee been disciplined, reassigned, placed on leave, terminated, or otherwise held accountable? If so, identify the position of each employee and the action taken.

Mecklenburg County immediately took action to address this situation. This occurred before the state's investigation and before any inquiry from the Committee.

1 Senior Social Service Manager- Terminated
1 Social Worker Supervisor - Resigned
1 Senior Social Service Manager- Disciplined
4 Social Worker Supervisors- Disciplined
1 Child Welfare Specialist III- Disciplined
2 Child Welfare Specialist IIs- Disciplined
2 Child Welfare Specialist Is- Disciplined

7. Did the County Manager's Office review the DSS chain of command responsible for intake, screening, assessment, safety planning, supervision, and final case decisions?

Yes, Mecklenburg County leadership received the comprehensive case review results and met with staff involved in the case.

8. Did Mecklenburg County leadership know of broader screening, staffing, safety planning, documentation, supervision, or law enforcement notification failures before Dominique Moody's death?

Mecklenburg County's new leadership team was aware of general operational challenges that are common across child welfare systems-such as workforce capacity, documentation timeliness and supervisory oversight-and had already begun implementing improvements. These issues were being monitored and addressed through standard quality assurance processes and training. The fatality prompted a deeper review that revealed the full extent of concerns, and additional corrective actions have since been put in place.

9. Did Mecklenburg County DSS request additional staff, funding, training, supervision, technology, or operational support before Dominique Moody's death?

Yes, prior to the fatality, additional staff, training, and technology were provided to support daily operations. This support included additional social workers and supervisors, training staff, Practice Model and Policy staff, kinship navigators as well as technology support such as Safe Measures (case management system), Binti (child placement and foster parent support case management system) as well as Avenues Accenture virtual reality learning module headsets.

10. Did the County Manager's Office deny, delay, or fail to act on any request from DSS related to child welfare operations?

Under previous County leadership, staffing within CFAS was a holistic lens on the collective department which encouraged filing of all vacancies before requesting additional positions. That may have led to a perception within CFAS divisions that net new positions were discouraged for the department.

11. Has Mecklenburg County reviewed all open CPS cases to determine whether any other child is currently unsafe?

Yes, all open CPS cases are reviewed by supervisors, managers, Continuous Quality Improvement staff as well as external contracted staff to assess for child safety. Each case is evaluated to identify any indicators of safety threats and ensure compliance with policy. Any cases requiring follow-up are triggered and addressed promptly.

12. Has Mecklenburg County reviewed screened-out reports to determine whether reports were improperly closed without assessment? Y

Yes, screen-out reports are reviewed by the manager, Continuous Quality Improvement team as well as external contracted staff.

13. Has Mecklenburg County reviewed cases involving repeated calls for service to the same address, repeated reports involving the same child, or repeated reports involving the same caretaker?

Yes. An escalation process involving the director and assistant director is in place to address repeated calls and reports involving the same caretaker.

14. What specific corrective actions has Mecklenburg County taken since Dominique Moody's death?

Mecklenburg County implemented an immediate Child Safety and Operational Plan that included: (1) case and safety assessment reviews (implemented enhanced case staffing for children assessed as high or moderate risk), (2) supervisory and practice oversight (increase frequency of case consultations between supervisors and workers, implemented mandatory manager and assistant director approval for key case decisions for high-risk cases), (3) staffing and workload management (adjusted caseload assignments, added temporary and reassigned staff to support cases and follow up) (4) increased staff training and skill-building.

15. Why should the General Assembly have confidence that Mecklenburg County can correct these failures without further State intervention?

Thank you for this question. It is a valid question, and based upon the information provided, I believe this body can have every assurance that Mecklenburg County, based upon the actions taken on its own initiative this body can have assurances that Mecklenburg takes this work very seriously and is committed to improving its process without need for state intervention. When we learned of the situation,

- (1) we took immediate responsibility for identified concerns, initiated comprehensive reviews and demonstrated accountability and transparency.
- (2) we have already put in place substantial corrective measures-enhanced case reviews, strengthened supervisory oversight, targeted staff training and ongoing quality assurance, even before the state's recommendations.
- (3) we have strengthened leadership and oversight as leadership is actively engaged, responsive and aligned on expectations for practice improvement. Clear accountability structures are in place, including direct oversight of high-risk cases and routine monitoring to ensure compliance.
- (4) Mecklenburg county is working constructively with State partners. This collaboration shows that additional intervention is not needed as Mecklenburg County is already aligned with State expectations and acting proactively.

As a result of the State's 123 Mecklenburg County case review shared in April 2026, the

following strengths were identified:

Intake:

- 96% of intake case decisions were appropriately screened according to policy.
- 91% of screened-in intakes were assigned to the most appropriate track.
- 82% of screened-in intakes were assigned to the appropriate response time to the allegation characteristics.
- 63% of reporter notification letters were sent within 5 days of the CPS intake.
- 64% of cases where reports contained allegations that may have met criminal definition of child abuse, case files did include verbal and written notifications to the District Attorney and Law Enforcement

Investigations/ Assessment:

- 84% of safety assessments had appropriate outcomes.
- 77% of information documented on the safety assessment correlate with information obtained from the interview and observation.
- 77% of ongoing face-to-face contacts after initiation were made with all the children in the home at least monthly.
- 100% of contacts were made at least weekly with temporary safety provider.
- 73% of collateral contacts identified in the intake report were made.
- 93.2% of collateral contacts identified by the parent/caretakers were made.
- 77% of collateral contacts of other persons or agencies known to be currently involved with the family or have knowledge of the family were made.
- 94% of at least two collateral contacts were made during the CPS Assessment

We have shown there are many positives regarding the work in Mecklenburg in this area. We recognized the areas of improvement, and we began to address those areas even before the state's review. NCDHHS leaders indicated in our debrief meeting on May 20 that they have full confidence that we can turn this around, which is why NCDHHS issued corrective action rather than divesting the County of Child Protective Services. We appreciate the confidence and collaboration, and we are committed to this work.