

# NC FAST Child Welfare Case Management Software Demonstrates Adequate Functionality but Poor Usability

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## Our Charge

- Directive: Examine the child welfare case management functionality of NC FAST P4
- As part of this charge, the team also examined P4 usability and additional child welfare issues
- Team: Sara Nienow, Adora Thayer, and Natalie Garrett

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## Highlighted Findings

1. NC FAST P4 is functional and meets most of the State's goals with the exception of management reporting and data entry
2. NC FAST P4 usability is unacceptably low, making it difficult for workers to complete tasks
3. Issues surrounding appropriations have delayed improvements to functionality; indecision about P4 will increase overall project costs and may subject the State to federal penalties



## Other Findings

4. Lack of a unified child welfare practice model and resource disparities among counties hinder the State's ability to implement a child welfare case management system
5. Lack of state policy leadership and insufficient training have also stymied development and implementation of NC FAST P4
6. NC FAST's oversight structure contributed to P4 development and implementation challenges



## DHHS Recommendations

The General Assembly should direct DHHS to

- prioritize usability in future vendor contracts
- require a free proof of concept for any additional software
- collaborate with a qualified organization to develop a system of standardized child welfare business processes
- require any future training contractor to conduct culture change readiness training



## DIT Recommendation

If the General Assembly chooses to fund NC FAST in Fiscal Year 2020–21, it should direct DIT to embed staff within the NC FAST team to provide additional state oversight and reporting on P4 challenges

