

Section I:	Administration
Title:	Public Comment
Chapter:	DSS Board
Current Effective Date:	09/21/16
Revision History:	09/21/16
Original Effective Date:	09/21/16

13.0 INTRODUCTION

13.1 Overview

Moore County Department of Social Services (MCDSS) has established procedures for allowing members of the public an opportunity to offer comments and suggestions to the Department. A Public Comment Period allows the public to directly address the Board during a specific time set aside during each regularly scheduled meeting.

13.2 Policy

This procedure follows those developed by the Moore County Board of Commissioners.

13.3 Purpose

To outline the parameters for the public to directly address the MCDSS Board during regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The Moore County Board of Social Services is committed to allowing members of the public an opportunity to offer comments and suggestions for the efficient and effective administration of government. In addition to public hearings, a special time is set aside for the purpose of receiving such comments and suggestions.

13.4 Process

All comments and suggestions addressed to the Board during the Public Comment Period shall be subject to the following procedures:

1. The Public Comment period will be held at the beginning of the Board meeting. The comment period will be limited to a maximum of thirty minutes.
2. Persons who wish to address the Board during the Public Comment Period will register on a sign-up sheet available at the receptionist desk, indicating contact information and topic. Sign-up sheets will be available beginning 30 minutes before the start of the meeting. No one will be allowed to have his/her name placed on the list by telephone request to County Staff.
3. Each person signed up to speak will have three (3) minutes to make his/her remarks. Each person signed up to speak will only be entitled to the time allotted to each speaker and one additional time period which may be yielded to him/her by another individual who has also signed up to speak on a particular topic.

MOORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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4. Speakers will be acknowledged by the Board Chairperson in the order in which their names appear on the sign-up sheet. Speakers will address the Board from the lectern at the front of the room and begin their remarks by stating their name and address.
5. Public comment is not intended to require the Board to answer any impromptu questions. However, Board members may, in their discretion and after being recognized by the Board Chairperson, respond to speakers' comments. Any response by a Board member to a speaker during the public comment period does not open discussion between the Board member and speaker. Speakers will address all comments to the Board as a whole and not one individual Board member. Discussions between speakers and members of the audience will not be allowed.
6. Speakers will be courteous in their language and presentation. Matters or comments which are harmful, discriminatory or embarrassing to any citizens, official or employee of Moore County shall not be allowed. Speaker must be respectful and courteous in their remarks and must refrain from personal attacks and the use of profanity.
7. Only one speaker will be acknowledged at a time. If the time period runs out before all persons who have signed up get to speak, those names will be carried over to the next Public Comment Period.
8. Any applause will be held until the end of the Public Comment Period.
9. Speakers who have prepared written remarks or supporting documents are encouraged to leave a copy of such remarks and documents with the Board Chairperson.
10. Speakers shall not discuss any of the following: matters which concern the candidacy of any person seeking public office, including the candidacy of the person addressing the Board; matters which are closed session matters, including but not limited to matters within the attorney-client privilege, anticipated or pending litigation, personnel, matters which are made confidential by law; matters which are the subject of public hearings.
11. Information sheets outlining the process for the public's participation in Board meetings will also be available in the Board Meeting Room.
12. Action on items brought up during the Public Comment Period will be at the discretion of the Board.

Adopted on the 22th day of June 2016 by a 3/0 vote of the Moore County Board of Social Services.