BURLINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
August 20, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT:	Sarah Holley, Chairperson Dee Bayles, Secretary/Treasurer Pamela Hall-King, Citizen Member Saima Bhutta, Citizen Member (telephone) Anastasia Zuccaro, Citizen Member Jaclyn Veasy, Citizen Member (arrived at 4:46 p.m.) Tyler Burrell, County Commissioner
EXCUSED:	Harriette Cohen, Vice Chairperson Felicia Hopson, County Commissioner
STAFF:	Dr. Adela Ames-Lopez, Interim Director Evan Crook, Esq., General Counsel Natalia Hudson-Cheek, Paralegal Specialist
VISITORS:	Lila Myers, Administrative Supervisor of Social Work Marietta DiBartolomeo, HR — Nicole LeCates, Office Services Yolanda Nichols, Asst. Admin. — Zanna Taylor, Asst. Admin Brian Devone, IT Supervisor — Approximately 21 Visitors

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT: (read by Interim Director, Dr. Adela Ames-Lopez)

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by: (a) prominently posting the annual Notice of Meetings Resolution and maintaining such notice on a public bulletin board reserved for such or similar announcements: (b) submitting the Annual Notice of Meetings Resolution for publication in the Burlington County Times, the Board's official newspaper, on February 1, 2026, and the Courier Post, the Board's alternative official newspaper on February 4, 2026, within seven business days of the Board's reorganization meeting of January 27, 2026; (c) filing the Annual Notice of Meetings Resolution with the Clerk of the County of Burlington; and (d) mailing the Annual Notice of Meetings Resolution to any persons who shall have prepaid to receive such notice.

ROLL CALL

VISITORS ANNOUNCED

MINUTES: *Motion made by Pamela Hall-King, duly seconded by Dee Bayles, and unanimously carried to approve the open and executive minutes of July 16, 2026.*

Member Name	Yay	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Cohen				√
Holley	√			
Bayles	√			
Bhutta	√			

Hall-King	√			
Veasy				√ (late)
Zuccaro	√			
Burrell	√			
Hopson				√

CORRESPONDENCE: Read into the record by Interim Director, Dr. Adela Ames-Lopez.

A. Thank you from a customer to Melissa Smith
B. Thank you from a supervisor to Elena Cojoc

Dr. Adela Ames-Lopez acknowledged and thanked Melissa Smith, then thanked Elena Cojoc for processing her cases in a timely manner. The Director also read a thank you card into the record from Lila Myers, Administrative Supervisor of Social Work, thanking all for the flowers and acknowledgment.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None.

RESOLUTIONS:

A. 2026-24 BCIC Renewal
B. 2026-25 Antivirus Renewal
C. 2026-26 Email Protection Renewal

Combined all three resolutions into one motion, which was made by Dee Bayles, duly seconded by Commissioner Tyler Burrell, and unanimously carried to approve all three resolutions.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Agency Update (by Interim Director, Dr. Adela Ames-Lopez)

- NJ Family Care, Burlington County, ranked number one for MAGI renewals and intakes.
- ABD is making great strides; we added additional staff to the unit this month.
- SNAP timeliness continues to improve; kudos to the staff: May 74.17%, June 84.57%, July 88.07%.
- PER for fiscal year 2025 was 16.98%; for 2026, Burlington's current rate is 0%. Among the most common errors for Burlington are shelter deductions, wages and salaries, dependent care deductions, and missing reports.
- In July, the staff completed 1,359 intake interviews and processed 448 ABD renewals.
- Currently, there are 200 TANF, 400 GA/ABAWD, and 770 EA households under case management.

I am a quantitative, matrix person; we serve approximately 56,804 residents in Burlington County; 12,208 residents receive ABD benefits. We need to become more efficient and eliminate bottleneck issues in ABD. There are many residents in Burlington County; keep up the good work.

REQUISITION OF ESTIMATED FUNDS:

Motion made, duly seconded, and unanimously carried to approve the reports for Assistance payments and approval of Assistance payments, initial grants and changes in grants, closings, denials, withdrawals, and dismissals. Also, approved receipts and disbursements for CSP, Administration, Unemployment, and Clearing Account. Also, approved payment of Administrative bills and ratified the administrative actions of the Director.

TAB A: Motion made by Commissioner Burrell, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to approve.

TAB B & TAB C: (combined) Motion made by Commissioner Burrell, duly seconded by Saima Bhutta, and unanimously carried to approve.

TAB D: Motion made by Commissioner Burrell, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to approve.

Member Name	Yay	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Cohen				√
Holley	√			
Bayles	√			
Bhutta	√			
Hall-King	√			
Veasy				√ (late)
Zuccaro	√			
Burrell	√			
Hopson				√

PERSONNEL:

A. Separation of employment, Lisa Tedesco, Legal Secretary (PA), Range 14, $53,419, effective July 17, 2026.

B. Separation of employment, Nora Amador, Human Services Specialist 1, Range 13, $52,104, effective July 22, 2026.

C. Separation of employment, Michelle Animwah, Human Services Specialist 1, Range 13, $52,104, effective July 22, 2026.

D. Separation of employment, Alexis Bowling, Human Services Specialist 1, Range 13, $52,104, effective July 22, 2026.

E. Separation of employment, Austin Willis, Human Services Specialist 1, Range 13, $56,104, effective July 22, 2026.

Motion made by Commissioner Burrell, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to approve Personnel Items A through E.

F. Authorize the Interim Director's action in the regular appointment of the following Clerk 1s, Range 5, $42,344, effective August 3, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures:

Alexandra Aponte	Heather Berkey	Francis Bicker
Lisa Clemens	Keonna Durham	Danielle Finn
Ashley Golia	Brittney Hunter	Dina Imperial
Tracy Mitchell	Lauren Vrabel	

G. Authorize the Interim Director's action in the regular appointment of the following Human Services Specialist 1s, Range 13, $52,104, effective August 17, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures:

Kayshe Henry Devyn Perro

H. Authorize the Interim Director's action in the regular appointment of Justice Holloway, Paralegal Specialist, Range 19, $64,685, effective August 17, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures.

I. Authorize the Interim Director's action in the provisional appointment of Yolanda Pritchett, Human Services Aide – Bilingual, Range 11, $49,136, to Accounting Assistant, Range 15, $59,499, effective August 17, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures.

J. Authorize the Interim Director's action in the regular appointment of Veronica Pasquarella, Clerk 1, Range 5, $46,344 to Human Services Specialist 1, Range 13, $56,104, effective August 17, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures.

K. Authorize the Interim Director's action in the regular appointment of Jessica Reynolds, Clerk 1, Range 5, $42,344 to Human Services Specialist 1, Range 13, $52,104, effective August 17, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures.

Motion made by Pamela Hall-King, duly seconded by Commissioner Burrell, and unanimously carried to approve Personnel Items F through K.

PUBLIC COMMENT: (commenced at 4:41 p.m.)

If you wish to address the Board, please raise your hand and wait to be recognized by the Board Chairperson. Once recognized, please state your name for the record before beginning your remarks. All comments should be directed to the Board Chairperson. Each speaker will be allotted four minutes to address the Board. Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us conduct an orderly and respectful public meeting.

Bjana Swinson, Emergency Assistant, SS2: Discussed the dog bite incident that occurred this week. Bjana inquired if there is any protocol in place to prohibit dogs on property or in the building or any means to identify service animals.

Evan Crook, General Counsel, responded: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), staff must adhere to strict confidentiality and privacy guidelines regarding service animals. We cannot request any medical documentation, proof of certification, or specialized training logs, ask a client about the nature or severity of their disability. or ask detailed questions regarding how the animal assists with their disability.

Evan further reported that the incident involved a client's dog. A client was sitting on a bench when a second client approached and reached out their hand toward the animal. The dog bit the approaching client. The dog was placed under a mandatory 10-day quarantine following the incident. The matter is currently under court review. Since this is a formal legal process, our organization has no control or jurisdiction over the outcome.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED (concluded at 4:44 p.m.)

BOARD ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: None

Pursuant to Resolution No. 2026-27 and the Open Public Meetings Act, the Board will now enter into executive session to discuss personnel matters, labor relations, litigation, and matters subject to the attorney-client privilege. Formal action may be taken upon the Board's return to open session.

The public is advised that, at the conclusion of the executive session, the Board will reconvene in regular public session. In addition to entertaining a motion to adjourn, the Board may take formal action on any matters arising from the executive session discussions that are appropriate for public action.

Members of the public who wish to be present when the Board reconvenes are welcome to remain and wait outside the room during the executive session. Thank you for your patience and cooperation. Need a motion and a second.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion made by Pamela Hall-King, duly seconded by Commissioner Burrell, and unanimously carried to approve entering Executive Session.

The Board then convened an executive session at 4:46 p.m.

OPEN SESSION:

Motion made to return to open session by Pamela Hall-King, duly seconded by Commissioner Burrell, and unanimously carried at 4:53 p.m.

Evan Crook, Esquire, General Counsel, read the oral resolution into the record, effective August 17, 202, for salary increase item(s).

Motion made by Commissioner Burrell, duly seconded by Anastasia Zuccaro, and unanimously carried to approve the oral resolution.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Commissioner Burrell, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m.