



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Guidelines for completing the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) 2012-2013 County Biennial Service Agreement Requirements

Unless otherwise noted, questions or feedback on these guidelines should be submitted to:

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SECTION I: BACKGROUND

Biennial Service Agreement

The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), [Minn. Stat. §256J.626](#), subd.4, requires counties to have an approved service agreement to receive consolidated funds. The instructions provided in this bulletin are for the calendar years 2012-2013 biennial service agreement.

The primary purpose of the service agreement is to assess statewide efforts toward the goal of “economic stability for low income families” under MFIP. The agreement provides an assessment of ongoing needs of families and children within program areas, resources available to address these needs, budgeting of allocated resources, and community participation and review in the planning and development of the service agreement.

The 2012-2013 service agreement builds upon existing efforts by counties to serve the needs of families and children, and to assess how well current efforts are leading to better outcomes for Minnesota families.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (department) encourages and supports sharing of useful information across and between counties and tribes. Counties are encouraged to share with the department efforts and strategies that are leading to improved outcomes.

Types of service agreements

Counties may choose to submit an individual or multi-county service agreement. An individual or multi-county agreement must indicate that it has been approved by the respective county boards by completing the Certification for Submission box in the Biennial Service Agreement form. Responses to the service agreement should be individualized, concise, and suitable for public distribution. Final plans will be posted on the department’s website.

Public input

Counties must allow for public input on the use of funds under the Minnesota Family Investment Program as required by federal and state laws. Counties may integrate public input participation with ongoing quality of service evaluations and feedback processes with other program requirements. Upon receipt of these instructions, county staff may begin the solicitation process for public input and participation in the development and review of the plan to fulfill the 30-day requirement. It is not necessary to wait until a draft is ready before seeking public input; an invite for public participation can begin as a county starts developing its plan.

Deadline

Minnesota statutes require that plans be submitted to the department by Oct. 15, 2011. If a county cannot meet this deadline, an email request for an extension should be submitted to the department prior to the deadline. Submit this request to: paul.ramcharit@state.mn.us.

Fillable Form

The Service Agreement form can be accessed by clicking the link below. The form is a Microsoft® Word format that can be saved on a local drive, preferably using the county's name (e.g., Marshall County 2012-2013 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement). Use this fillable form to provide responses.

[2012-2013 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement Form](#)

Submission

Upon final approval by the county board or authorized designee, submit the Microsoft® Word document and all other required documents as email attachments to: paul.ramcharit@state.mn.us. For questions or technical assistance, contact Paul at (651) 431-3877.

Approval

Department staff will inform county agencies by Dec. 31, 2011, if their service agreement has been approved. If the service agreement is not approved, department staff will inform the county of any revisions or additional information needed for approval. **Counties must have an approved service agreement to receive MFIP consolidated funds.**

SECTION II: UPDATES

Legislative Updates

The 2011 Minnesota Legislature reduced the MFIP Consolidated Fund base by \$10,000,000 each year beginning in state fiscal year 2012. This reduction is permanent. Other legislative changes to MFIP are detailed in bulletin # 11-11-02.

SECTION III: GUIDELINES

General Background

The MFIP Consolidated Fund provides funding for services counties and tribes must provide by law, and for other services counties may provide to eligible families. The decision to fund a program or service, and the level of funding within statutory guidelines, should be made based on a county's best determination of which investments will lead to the greatest improvement in outcomes for families. Current statutory obligations for counties' use of MFIP Consolidated Funds are as follows:

1. Administer MFIP financial assistance
2. Administer the Diversionary Work Program (DWP)
3. Administer the Work Benefit Program
4. Deliver MFIP and DWP employment services
5. Provide family stabilization services
6. Process MFIP cases approaching the 60-month time limit.

Counties and tribes may continue successful approaches or develop new strategies to move MFIP and DWP families to work and transition them to economic stability.

Counties and tribes have the flexibility to determine levels of funding for the primary services in MFIP, including whether or not to administer emergency services programs and at what funding level. County staff also determine effective strategies to implement in addressing local needs.

There is **no** carrying forward of funds between calendar years for counties and tribes. The department, however, may reallocate unencumbered or unexpended MFIP funds to counties or tribes that demonstrate a need for additional funds, or may use the funds for innovative projects to address the needs of MFIP participants.

Eligibility for benefits and services under the MFIP Consolidated Fund is limited to pregnant women, families with a minor child, or non-custodial parents of minor children receiving MFIP, whose income is under 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG).

The department retains files on each county's emergency services plan in order to answer requests for information from internal and external sources, including the Minnesota Legislature. Whenever changes are made to a county's emergency services plan, submit a copy of the revised plan as an email attachment to: mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us. Counties with American Indian reservations are to consult with the tribes on policies governing provision of MFIP emergency services.

Goal and Outcomes

The MFIP overall goal is economic stability for low income families. There are specific performance measures defined in statute for monitoring the success of MFIP. Counties that meet or exceed the county-specific performance requirements are eligible for performance-based funding.

1 Three-year MFIP Self-support Index

The three-year MFIP Self-support Index (S-SI) is the percentage of MFIP/DWP cases off cash assistance or working 30 or more hours per week three years after a baseline quarter. Each quarter, counties are notified of their performance on the three-year S-SI, as well as their range of expected performance on this measure. The range of expected performance levels the playing field among counties by accounting for differences in demographic and economic characteristics.

2 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Work Participation Rate Target

The TANF Work Participation Rate (WPR) is the percentage of countable work-eligible individuals who successfully meet work requirements.

Counties are notified of their performance on the S-SI and WPR in the quarterly Management Indicator Report. Editions of the report can be accessed by clicking on the link below and scrolling down to the section titled MFIP Management Indicator Report:

[MFIP Management Indicator Report](#)

3 Promoting Equity in MFIP Outcomes

In addition to the S-SI and WPR, a third indicator, promoting equity in MFIP outcomes, was developed to assist counties to monitor and address performance gaps among racial/ethnic and immigrant groups. Racial/ethnic and immigrant data in this service agreement compares the performance of racial subgroups to the performance of white participants in the respective county. When there is a performance gap of 5 percentage points or more, a county will be asked to respond to questions on how it plans to address the inequity. Counties need to review the racial/ethnic and immigrant data link in the service agreement to determine if the county is required to complete this section of the service agreement.

SECTION IV: ALLOCATIONS AND BUDGETS

Base Allocation

For calendar year 2012-2013 and beyond, the initial MFIP allocation will be based 50 percent on a county's 2002 historical spending, and 50 percent on its adjusted adult and caseload counts.

Performance-based Funding

Changes in state statute allow for a caseload reduction credit (CRC). A caseload reduction credit is the measure of how much Minnesota TANF and separate state program caseloads have fallen relative to federal fiscal year 2005 caseload data. The TANF work participation rate target is 50 percent less the CRC for the previous year. The CRC is calculated to be 10.2 percent for 2012; therefore, the TANF work participation rate is 39.8 percent for CY 2012. The 2013 rate will be determined in December 2011.

For CY 2012, a county or tribe that achieves a 39.8 percent TANF work participation rate, or a 5 percentage point improvement over the previous year's TANF participation rate, will receive an additional 2.5 percent of its initial allocation. Counties or tribes failing to achieve these thresholds will not receive an additional 2.5 percent until a performance improvement plan is completed and approved by the department.

A county or tribe that does not perform within its range of expected performance on the annualized three-year Self-support Index will not receive an additional 2.5 percent of its initial allocation until a performance improvement plan is completed, and approved by the department.

2012 Allocation

Access the 2012 allocation document by following the CountyLink below:

[MFIP Consolidated Fund Support Services, Calendar Year 2012 Allocation](#)

Budgets

Submitting a Biennial Budget

Counties must complete and submit a budget for CYs 2012 and 2013. To facilitate timely planning and submission of agreements, counties should use the 2012 MFIP allocation to estimate its 2013 proposed budget. When allocations for 2013 are finalized, counties may have to submit a revised budget.

MFIP Administrative Cap Waiver Request

MFIP provisions allow counties to request a waiver of the MFIP administrative cap (currently 7.5 percent) for providing supported employment, unpaid work, or community work experience programs for a major segment of a county's or tribe's MFIP population.

Counties may request a waiver of the administrative cap when submitting their 2012-2013 service agreement by completing the information requested in the budget section of the Service Agreement form. To apply for the waiver after submission of the service agreement, complete the 2012-2013 MFIP Budget Revision form found below, and answer questions relating to the administrative cap waiver.

Emergency Services Policy

If dollars are budgeted for emergency services, ensure that the department has a copy of the county's most current emergency services policy. A copy of the county's emergency services policy can be emailed as an attachment to: mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us. Notify the department of any changes to emergency services policies or changes in budgeted dollars during 2012-2013.

Income Maintenance Direct Administration

Income maintenance administration in the budget line item has been changed to income maintenance direct administration. Income maintenance direct administration covers income maintenance costs approved and claimed through DHS-2902. These costs must also be reported in DHS-2550, page 6, under MFIP Consolidated Fund. These costs do not earn Federal Financial Participation (FFP) through the income maintenance cost schedule.

A county must get prior approval from the department's Financial Management Division before it can allocate funds into this category. Contact Jerry Medicott, (651) 431-3781, or email at gerald.medlicott@state.mn.us for more information.

Submitting Budget Change

Counties are encouraged to monitor MFIP funds during the year so the use of MFIP dollars is maximized to address the needs of families. Counties have the flexibility, under the consolidated fund, and within the statutory guidelines, to shift dollars among budget line items based on priorities, local need, and levels of unspent funds during the calendar year. When budget changes are made, county staff should send an email informing the department of the budget change. Department staff will update the records.

In addition, when updated MFIP allocations are published, county staff should compare their allocation to their service agreement budgets, and submit a budget revision if one or more of the following criteria is met:

- Plus or minus (+/-) 10 percent or more, or
- The difference is plus or minus (+/-) \$100,000 or more.

If a county meets one of the above criteria, a revised budget should be submitted to the department within 30 days after the most current allocation bulletin is published, using the Budget Revision form provided below. Send the completed form as an email attachment to mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us. A county that does not meet the above criteria is encouraged to revisit its budget to reflect actual allocations for operational purposes, even though it is not required to submit a revised budget to the department.

[2012-2013 Budget Revision Form](#)

SECTION V: MISCELLANEOUS

Client Appeals

Services, programs and funds that are denied, reduced and/or terminated for clients under the MFIP Consolidated Fund are subject to client appeal. The department's appeals staff will continue to hear these appeals. The general statutes which govern all human services appeals is found in Minnesota Statutes, sections 256.045 and 256.0451. The role of the Appeals and Regulations Division is to ascertain the pertinent facts, and apply the governing law to those facts to determine a person's proper entitlement to benefits, payments or services.

Data Sharing

For concerns regarding sharing of data within county agencies, staff should refer to the Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat., section 13.46.

Records Retention

Counties must retain copies of service agreements for at least six years after approval by the department.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling (651) 431-4671 (voice). TTY users can call through Minnesota Relay at (800) 627-3529. For Speech-to-Speech, call (877) 627-3848. For additional assistance with legal rights and protections for equal access to human services programs, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.

Appendix: 2012-2013 County MFIP Biennial Service Agreement Form

* * *

Complete all applicable questions and provide brief but informative responses to the required questions. Information from responses is public and may be shared with DHS staff and other counties. Ensure that responses are edited before submission.

2012-2013 County MFIP Biennial Service Agreement

January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2013



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Type of Biennial Service Agreement

Individual county agreement

Multi-county agreement

County name:	County names:
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Contact Information

Contact Information:

Contact person:	
Title:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

Part A: Statement of Needs

1. The Minnesota Legislature made significant budget cuts to the Consolidated Fund. What impact will this have on the provision of services?

2. In reviewing current services, which ones, if any, will be eliminated or reduced as a result of the budget cuts?

Part B: Strengths and Resources

1. Strengths and Resources Available

Describe the strengths and resources available in the county to address the needs of MFIP/DWP families.

2. Family Stabilization Services

a. Contact information

Name of FSS contact person:	
Contact phone:	
Email:	

b. Service model

Review the county's Family Stabilization Services (FSS) service model in the 2010-2011 Biennial Service Agreement before completing this section of the plan. Has the FSS service model changed?

No

Yes If yes, complete the question below:

Describe, in detail, the service model used by the county to provide Family Stabilization Services (FSS), including how and by whom: (1) eligibility is determined and (2) cases are managed.

3. County Staff Person Responsible for County Contract(s)

Provide the name, phone number, and email address of the county staff responsible for overseeing county employment services contracts.

Name of contact person:	
Phone:	
Email address:	

4. County Financial Assistance Contact Information

Provide the name, phone number, and email address of the financial assistance contact person for the county.

Name of contact person:	
Phone:	
Email address:	

5. Provider Information

List the current employment services provider(s) and check the respective box to indicate which types of services are provided. Add more rows if needed.

Name and address	Contact person	Phone	Types of services provided (Check with an 'X')			
			MFIP ES	DWP ES	FSS	Disparity

Part C: Outcomes and Measures

Access the links below and review the county's/tribe's Self-support Index (S-SI) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Work Participation Rate (WPR) performance:

- [Performance data S-SI](#)
- [Performance data WPR](#)

All Counties

Complete the table and questions below with the county's/tribe's performance on each of the measures, and enter if standards were met/not met for April 2010 – March 2011. In the last two columns, set practical performance targets the county will work towards achieving in the 2012 and 2013 biennium.

Measure	Standard	Annualized Performance April 2010 – March 2011		Anticipated Targets	
		County Performance	Standard met?	2012	2013
S-SI	Within or above the range of expected performance on the annualized three - year S-SI	%		%	%
WPR	WPR of 39.8% (50% minus a CRC of 10.2%) or a 5 percentage point improvement from the previous year	%		%	%

For each measure for which the county/tribe met the standard, in the respective box below, provide a summary of successful strategies, including an overview of how well current practices are working to improve the county's/tribe's current performance. Include any new strategies the county/tribe will implement in the 2012-2013 biennium.

S-SI Performance Strategies

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WPR Performance Strategies

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Counties *below* the expected range of performance on the SS-I and/or with a WPR rate *below* 39.8 percent that *did not* achieve a 5 percent improvement from the previous year.

These counties will not receive the 2.5 percent performance bonus for the SS-I and/or the WPR unless they submit a performance improvement plan that is approved by the department. If the county is planning to submit a PIP for the SS-I and/or the WPR, access the links below for instructions on how to complete the form:

- [PIP instructions](#)
- [2012 PIP Form](#)

Performance data of subgroups on the S-SI and WPR over four alternate quarters covering July 2009 – March 2011 (July – September 2009, January–March 2010, July–September 2010 and January–March 2011) are provided below. Performance gaps were calculated when a county subgroup performance was five percentage points or more below the performance of whites. [Only county and subgroup caseloads of 30 or more were used for this measure] Click on the link below to review a summary of subgroup performance data for S-SI and WPR within the county.

[Two-year Performance Trend of Racial/Ethnic and Immigrant Sub-groups](#)

Counties with a performance gap in one or more subgroups

If the county has one or more subgroups with a performance gap in *both* the last quarter (Jan. –Mar. 2011), and the average of the four quarters, list the subgroup(s), providing the required data in the table, and respond to the questions that follow for each of the subgroup(s) listed.

1. Counties with a 5 percent gap in outcomes as shown on the WPR/SS-I between the non-white population and white population within the county will need to complete this section.

Population	WPR%	WPR#	WPR proposed change by % and #	SS-I %	SS-I #	SS-I proposed change by % and #	By what date will improvement occur

2. Identify at least three strategies and at least two action steps under each strategy that the county will use to reduce disparities in outcomes for each population identified in question 1. (Add additional tables if there are more than two non-white populations that have a disparity.)

Population	Strategy	Action Steps

Population	Strategy	Action Steps

3. How will the county monitor progress toward reduction in disparities on a semi-annual basis?

4. What are the criteria for improvements other than a reduction in the disparities gap itself?

5. How will the county continue to engage community partners, particularly employers, with disparities efforts?

Part D: Budget

Click on the link below to review the 2012 MFIP allocations:

[2012 MFIP Allocations](#)

In the last biennium, the department received federal stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for short-term nonrecurring services. Counties were asked to revise their emergency services/crisis plans to include a wide variety of services that the funds can cover. Now that the stimulus funds have ended, the department requests that for those counties that did not send in a revised plan as of January 2011, email the current plan to Mayjoua Ly at mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us The department maintains a file on each county’s emergency services/crisis plans in order to answer requests for information from internal and external sources.

Emergency services in counties with American Indian reservations

Briefly describe how the county consults with the tribes on county emergency services and policies governing all residents of the county.

In the budget table, indicate the amount and percentage for each item listed for the budget line items for calendar years 2012-2013. Also note:

- Total percent must equal 100.
- MFIP administration is capped at 7.5 percent unless the county is applying for an administrative cap waiver. To apply for the administrative cap waiver, respond to the questions that follow this budget page.
- If “other” is used, briefly state or describe the line item.

2012 MFIP	Budgeted Amount	Percent
Employment services (DWP)	\$	%
Employment services (MFIP)	\$	%
Emergency services	\$	%
Administration	\$	%
Income maintenance direct administration	\$	%
Other 1 (please state):	\$	%
Other 2 (please state):	\$	%
Total	\$	100 %

2013 MFIP	Budgeted Amount	Percent
Employment services (DWP)	\$	%
Employment services (MFIP)	\$	%
Emergency services	\$	%
Administration	\$	%
Income maintenance direct administration	\$	%
Other 1 (please state):	\$	%
Other 2 (please state):	\$	%
Total	\$	100 %

Administrative cap waiver (optional)

MFIP provisions allow counties to request a waiver of the MFIP administrative cap (currently 7.5 percent) for providing supported employment, unpaid work, or community work experience programs for a major segment of the county’s or tribe’s MFIP population.

Counties may request a waiver of the administrative cap when submitting their 2012-2013 service agreement by responding to the questions below.

Is the county requesting a waiver of the MFIP administrative cap for the 2012-2013 biennium?

No. No other action needs to be taken.

Yes. If yes, provide a concise response to the following three questions.

1. Describe the budget change (include any staff changes).

2. Describe any new activities or services will be provided.

3. Describe the targeted population and number of people expected to be served.

Part E: Certifications and Assurances

PUBLIC INPUT

Prior to submission, did the county facilitate a process soliciting public input for at least 30 days on the contents of the agreement? Yes No Was public input received/used? Yes No

ASSURANCES

It is understood and agreed by the county board that funds granted pursuant to this service agreement will be expended for the purposes outlined in [Minn. Stat. §256J](#); that the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (hereafter department) has the authority to review and monitor compliance with the service agreement, and that documentation of compliance will be available for audit; that the county shall make reasonable efforts to comply with all MFIP requirements, including efforts to identify and apply for available state and federal funding for services within the limits of available funding; and that the county agrees to operate MFIP in accordance with state law and guidance from the department.

SERVICE AGREEMENT CERTIFICATION

Checking this box certifies that this 2012-2013 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement has been prepared as required and approved by the county board(s) under the provisions of [Minn. Stat. §256J](#). In the box below, state the name of the chair of the county board of commissioners or authorized designee, their mailing address and the name of the county.

Name (chair or designee)	Mailing address	County

DATE OF CERTIFICATION