

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
444 LAFAYETTE ROAD  
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55155-3834

DWP EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MANUAL  
MANUAL LETTER #1

**Effective Date: July 1, 2004**

**To:** Employment Services Providers  
County Human Service Agency Directors  
and Other Manual Holders

**Subject:** Material for the DWP Employment Services Manual

This manual letter contains information for the new DWP Employment Services Manual. Section numbers for this Manual begin with a "D".

If there are **no** differences between MFIP ES and DWP ES information for a particular section, refer to the MFIP ES Manual. Use the DWP ES Manual **only** for information specific to the Diversionary Work Program.

This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities by calling 651-296-1835 (voice), toll free at 1-800-657-3698. You may also contact us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY), 7-1-1, or 1-877-627-3848 (speech-to-speech relay service). The Employment Services Manuals are also available on the DHS web site at <http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/>.

\*\*\*\*\*

If providers have questions on application of these policies for individual cases, they should contact the county human services agency.

If county human services agency staff have questions on application of these policies for individual cases, they should contact:

Local Agency Support Policy Center  
Minnesota Department of Human Services  
444 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-3835

Sincerely,

María R. Gómez  
Assistant Commissioner  
Children and Family Services Administration

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

**Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION AND GLOSSARY**

D.1.1 Introduction and DWP Program Goals

**Chapter 3 DWP PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND POLICIES**

D.3.1 Environment, Message and Urgency

D.3.2 Requirements and Sequence of DWP Employment Services

D.3.3 Revised (Ongoing) Employment Plan

D.3.4 Allowable DWP Work Activities

D.3.5 Addressing Barriers

D.3.6 Modified DWP Employment Plans

D.3.7 Unlikely to Benefit - Conversion or Referral to MFIP

D.3.8 Structured and Intensive Job Search

D.3.9 Transition to MFIP After 4-Month DWP Period

**Chapter 5 NON-COMPLIANCE AND DISQUALIFICATION**

D.5.1 Non-Compliance

D.5.2 Good Cause for Non-Compliance

D.5.3 Impact on Other Programs

**Appendices**

Appendix D.A MFIP Standards

Appendix D.F DHS Regional Teams for MFIP and DWP



**INTRODUCTION AND DIVERSIONARY WORK PROGRAM GOALS****D.1.1**

---

The 2003 legislature established a short-term work focused Diversionary Work Program (DWP). The DWP program must be implemented by July 1, 2004.

DWP is for families applying for cash benefits. It provides a maximum of 4 consecutive months in a 12-month period of quick and intense Employment Services and supports prior to MFIP participation. DWP is expected to divert many families from ever having to apply for MFIP. It also provides an opportunity to identify and resolve employment barriers earlier.

Families that are eligible for DWP are categorically eligible for FS, but FS eligibility is determined separately. Families that are eligible for DWP may also be eligible for Health Care, which is also determined separately.

The primary goal of the DWP is to provide short term benefits, intensive work supports and other necessary services to eligible families which will, on a fast track, lead to:

- ▶ Unsubsidized employment.
- AND
- ▶ increase economic stability.
- AND
- ▶ Reduced risk of those families needing longer term assistance under the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP).

An important secondary goal of DWP is to quickly identify and successfully address barriers that hinder a DWP job seeker's ability to successfully search for, obtain and retain unsubsidized employment. This secondary goal is important as it provides the opportunity for counties and ES providers to begin working with the job seeker to address barriers early, which should reduce the family's risk of hitting the MFIP 60-month time limit.



## ENVIRONMENT, MESSAGE AND URGENCY

## D.3.1

---

Counties and ES providers should create an atmosphere that makes it apparent to any individual who applies for cash that the DWP is, first and foremost, an employment program. People who apply for DWP should understand that they are expected to find jobs and go to work.

- ▶ The physical environment where the job seeker receives DWP services and supports should look and feel like an employment office. The office should have the equipment, resources, materials and staff available to help people find work. Counties should consider putting up posters and other displays which promote employment and job seeker success stories.
- ▶ The primary function of all staff who work with the DWP job seekers is to help the job seeker find and keep a job, regardless of whether the staff are financial workers, child care assistance workers, employment counselors, or clerical support staff. The #1 job for everyone during the 4-month DWP period is to provide the supports and services the job seeker requires to go to work. The work-focused message communicated to DWP job seekers from all staff, supervisors and managers should be strong and consistent.
- ▶ All staff working with DWP job seekers must convey the urgency of looking for and finding a job. This is important for two reasons. First, a DWP job seeker must develop and sign an **initial** Employment Plan before receiving any DWP cash benefits. The sooner a job seeker develops his or her Employment Plan, the sooner the family will receive DWP benefits. Second, DWP is a short term program that provides greater benefits to job seekers who find jobs quickly. In most cases, DWP does not consider income from a job that a job seeker finds after becoming eligible for DWP in determining the family's DWP benefits. Therefore, a DWP job seeker who goes to work during the early stages of the 4-month DWP period will benefit more from this policy.



## REQUIREMENTS AND SEQUENCE OF ES SERVICES

## D.3.2

---

All DWP job seekers, including both parents in a 2-parent family, are required to develop and sign initial Employment Plans before they are approved for any DWP cash benefits, including vendor paid shelter and utilities, phone service, and personal needs allowances. Counties have the flexibility to determine the activities and supports to include in each individual's Employment Plan.

A job seeker who does not comply with an Employment Plan is subject to disqualification from DWP.

**Referral to Employment Services**

Counties are **required** to refer a DWP job seeker to Employment Services **within one working day** of determining the job seeker meets all of the DWP financial eligibility tests.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Counties do have the flexibility to refer a job seeker to Employment Services **prior** to determining whether the job seeker meets eligibility requirements. Counties that choose to allow referrals prior to determining that the job seeker has passed all of the DWP eligibility tests can use their MFIP Consolidated Funds to provide Employment Services and supportive services to the job seeker, provided the job seeker's family income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

The referral to DWP Employment Services must be in writing and must contain the following information:

- ▶ Notification that, as part of the application process, a DWP job seeker is required to develop an Employment Plan or the DWP application will be denied.
- ▶ The name and phone number of the Employment Services provider.
- ▶ The date, time, and location and scheduled Employment Services interview.
- ▶ The immediate availability of supportive services, including, but not limited to, child care assistance, transportation, and other work-related aid. See ES Manual Chapter 4 (Supporting Participant Progress).
- ▶ The rights, responsibilities, and obligations of job seekers in the program, including but not limited to, the job seeker's rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the grounds for good cause, the consequences of refusing or failing to participate fully with program requirements,

## REQUIREMENTS AND SEQUENCE OF ES SERVICES

## D.3.2

---

and the appeal process. See ES Manual §1.2.30 (Civil Rights and the Americans with Disabilities Act).

Although the job seeker has up to 10 days to meet with a job counselor to develop the initial Employment Plan, the county should remind the job seeker that DWP benefits will not be issued until the Employment Plan is developed and signed. The county should make every reasonable effort to accommodate any job seeker who expresses interest in meeting with Employment Services as soon as possible.

**Initial Employment Services Meeting**

The Employment Services Provider and the job seeker have up to 10 days to meet for the purpose of developing and signing the **initial** DWP Employment Plan. At this first meeting, the employment counselor should, at a minimum:

- ▶ Review the goals and benefits of the program.
- ▶ Review the job seeker's rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ Provide an opportunity for the job seeker to self-disclose any issues or matters which may affect the job seeker's ability to obtain or retain employment.
- ▶ Develop the job seeker's initial Employment Plan.

**Initial Employment Plan**

Job seekers must sign an initial Employment Plan before any DWP cash benefits can be issued. The initial Employment Plan may be limited to activities that address the job seeker's immediate needs and requirements, such as working with local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to secure child care, stabilizing the family's housing situation, and other activities required for the job seeker to become fully engaged in DWP Employment Services.

The initial Employment Plan must also include the time allotted to the job seeker to address the activities in the plan, plus any due dates to complete the activities. Also, the initial Employment Plan must also include the supportive services which will be provided to the job seeker to address and support the activities that are included in the initial Employment Plan.

An initial Employment Plan may also include DWP work focused activities, such as job search and basic education activities, provided that including them will not result in delaying the issuance of benefits to the job seeker.

**REQUIREMENTS AND SEQUENCE OF ES SERVICES**

**D.3.2**

---

The initial Employment Plan must also include the date, time and location for the DWP job seeker's next meeting with the employment counselor.

The job seeker and job counselor must sign and date the initial Employment Plan. The DWP Employment Services Provider has **1 working day** to notify the county that the initial Employment Plan has been signed. Once notified, the county has **1 working day** to issue the DWP benefits.



## REVISED (ONGOING) EMPLOYMENT PLAN

## D.3.3

---

The initial Employment Plan will include a date and time the employment counselor and job seeker will meet next to update or revise the job seeker's Employment Plan.

The ongoing plan is a short term plan and lasts no more than 4 months. The plan should include activities the job seeker will be required to comply with while on DWP. DWP Employment Plans must fit each job seeker's individual situation. Most ongoing Employment Plans will be work-focused, although some job seekers' Employment Plans may include activities related to addressing barriers and other issues which hinder the job seeker's ability to look for, obtain or retain employment. See the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet below.

Job counselors and job seekers should revise the Employment Plan to keep it up to date.

Ongoing Employment Plans should include the following:

- ▶ Unsubsidized employment as the primary DWP goal.
- ▶ Specific activities that are work-focused and intensive that will lead to unsubsidized employment within the 4-month DWP period, and, when appropriate, the days of the week and hours of the day the job seeker is required to participate in each activity.
- ▶ Specific non-work activities relating to addressing barriers and issues which hinder the job seeker's progress, including health or disability related issues, when appropriate.
- ▶ The amount of time the job seeker is required to or allowed to spend on each activity, with a total of up to 35 hours of activity per week.
- ▶ Specific statements addressing what it means to comply with each activity.
- ▶ The supportive services provided to the job seeker by the county or Employment Services Provider.
- ▶ The dates, times and locations of future meetings and appointments the job seeker is required to attend, including future meetings with the employment counselor.
- ▶ Documentation and verification requirements.

Although the ongoing DWP Employment Plan cannot extend beyond the 4-month DWP period, it may include a **Job Seeker's Long Term Employment Goal Statement**, which

may be useful to MFIP employment counselors in the event the job seeker begins to receive MFIP assistance at a later date.

The job seeker and employment counselor should complete the “job goal” section of the standardized Employment Plan found in the Workforce One information system. This section includes the “targeted job interests” and “training related job goal”.

## ALLOWABLE DWP WORK ACTIVITIES

## D.3.4

---

**Allowable Activities and Restrictions on Education Related Activities**

An ongoing Employment Plan may include any activity that is allowable under MFIP, although some activities allowed under MFIP may not be appropriate for most DWP job seekers. For example, self-employment (SEID) is an allowable activity under MFIP and DWP, but it is highly unlikely that this activity will increase their family's economic stability within the 4-month DWP period. Therefore, self-employment should rarely, if ever, be included in a DWP job seeker's Employment Plan.

Grant diversion is another activity that, while allowed, is not consistent with DWP policy. Because DWP does not consider income from a job that a job seeker finds after becoming eligible for DWP in determining the family's DWP benefits, diverting the family's DWP benefits to an employer through grant diversion greatly reduces the benefit of this policy. Therefore, engaging a DWP job seeker in the grant diversion activity is not recommended.

There are also activities that are allowable, but with certain restrictions. The restricted activities are all education related, and with 1 exception, the restrictions are identical to restrictions these activities have under the MFIP program.

**Job Readiness Education**

- ▶ Any combination of general educational development (GED) course work, adult basic education (ABE) classes and English as a Secondary Language (ESL) cannot comprise more than one half the hours required in a job seeker's Employment Plan. (Same policy as MFIP.)
- ▶ Functional Work Literacy (FWC) cannot comprise more than two-thirds of the hours required in a job seeker's Employment Plan. (Same policy as MFIP.)
- ▶ Job seekers are not eligible for ABE unless they are at or below a 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading or math level. (Same policy as MFIP.)
- ▶ Job seekers are not eligible for ESL or FWL unless they have a spoken language proficiency level (SPL) of less than 6.0 or it's equivalent, as measured by a national test. (Same policy as MFIP.)
- ▶ The maximum number of months a job seeker can participate in ESL classes is 24. This is a combination of MFIP and DWP months. (Same Policy as MFIP.)

---

**Job Skills Training and Post Secondary Education**

Job skills training and post secondary education are only allowed when the training or education program will be completed before the end of the 4-month DWP period. Do NOT approve any training or education programs that will not be completed with the 4-month DWP period.

**Use of the “Other” Activity Code**

DWP Employment Plans may include the activity called “other”. When including “other” as an activity in an Employment Plan, the plan should describe the nature of the “other” activity.

**ADDRESSING BARRIERS****D.3.5**

---

**Assessments and Activities to Address Issues and Barriers**

Some DWP job seekers will have barriers and other issues that hinder their ability to effectively search for, obtain or retain employment. Issues such as child care and transportation, though challenging, should be covered during the initial meetings with a financial worker or job counselor, and included in the job seeker's initial Employment Plan. The plan must allow the job seeker time to address these types of barriers and a due date to have them addressed.

Other issues, such as a job seeker's physical or mental health, should be addressed in the job seeker's on-going/revised Employment Plan. The Employment Plan must include activities and hourly requirements that take the job seeker's individual circumstances into account. Examples include:

- ▶ Activities associated with addressing the barrier(s).
- ▶ Specific statements of what it means to comply with each activity.
- ▶ Time for the job seeker to address the barrier.
- ▶ Dates and times for follow-up meetings with the employment counselor for periodic updates on the participant's progress in addressing the barriers.

An Employment Plan for a job seeker with serious health issues may contain reduced hours.

**Identifying and Addressing Health Related Barriers**

During the initial ES meeting and in on-going ES meetings with the job seeker, job counselors should provide an opportunity for job seekers to self-identify any health related issue that may affect their ability to obtain or retain employment. In addition, the employment counselor should monitor participation in structured job search and other activities to identify difficulties that may indicate hidden barriers..

Job counselors may consider having the job seeker complete a screening tool to help identify possible barriers based on observations and interactions with a job seeker. The Job Counselor Observation Checklist (DHS-38430) should be used to record this information. The MFIP Self-Screen (DHS-3482) and the Brief Screening Tool for Special Learning Needs (DHS-3504) are tools which can be used to identify potential chemical dependency, mental help or learning disability barriers.

**ADDRESSING BARRIERS****D.3.5**

---

Job counselors should work with the job seeker to discuss a strategy for addressing health issues. When possible, the discussion should include the financial worker and other county staff who are familiar with the job seeker's family situation. Revise the Employment Plan when necessary.

**Referrals to Health Care Providers**

The strategy for addressing the health issues may include a referral to a health care provider. The employment counselor should assist the job seeker in arranging appointments, allow time in the Employment Plan for meeting with a health care provider, and time to follow the provider's treatment recommendations.

**Unlikely to Benefit Determinations**

If a referral to a health care professional results in the job seeker being determined unlikely to benefit from DWP, the employment counselor must notify the financial worker that the case must be converted to MFIP.

**PLEASE NOTE: DO NOT** use TANF funds to pay for medical services, including mental health diagnostic and chemical dependency assessment. All mental health diagnostic assessments have an integral functional component necessary for diagnostic purposes but which is not in and of itself a billable service. A diagnostic assessment is a specific medical service that can only be conducted by a licensed mental health professional.

A functional assessment conducted for the sole purpose of determining the impact of a barrier on an individual's employment is NOT a medical service nor is it equivalent to a mental health diagnostic assessment and TANF funds may be used.

---

**Modified Employment Plans and Special Circumstances**

In certain situations, the county or Employment Services Provider must develop an Employment Plan that takes into consideration the special circumstances of an individual job seeker. An Employment Plan developed for an individual job seeker with special circumstances, such as a physical disability or mental health issue, may include less hours, or activities that are not as directly work focused.

Situations when consideration for special circumstances must be taken into consideration include:

- ▶ A job seeker has an illness, injury, incapacity or mental health issue which has been verified by a qualified medical professional, but is not expected to last more than 60 days.
- ▶ A job seeker is needed in the home to care for a family member who has an illness, injury, incapacity or mental health issue that is verified by a qualified medical professional that is not expected to last more than 60 days.
- ▶ A job seeker is a member of a 2-parent household and has been determined unlikely to benefit from DWP, but is not eligible to be converted to MFIP because the 2<sup>nd</sup> parent in the household does not meet the unlikely to benefit criteria or an exclusion category. See §D.3.7 (Unlikely to Benefit - Conversion or Referral to MFIP).
- ▶ A job seeker is a member of a 2-parent household and meets a DWP exclusion category, but is not eligible for MFIP because the 2<sup>nd</sup> parent in the household does not meet the unlikely to benefit criteria or an exclusion category, including:
  - A minor who has not graduated from HS/GED.
  - An 18- or 19-year old who has not graduated from HS or received a GED, and has chosen the education option.
  - A caregiver who is 60 years old or older.
- ▶ A victim of family violence. See ES Manual §3.8.40 (Employment Plan for Victims of Family Violence).
- ▶ A parent with a child under 12 weeks. See ES Manual §2.5 (Universal Participation).

---

Also see §1.2.30 (Civil Rights and the Americans With Disabilities Act) in the ES Manual.

### **Victims of Family Violence**

If the job seeker documents that he or she is a victim of family violence, the Employment Plan must be developed in consultation with a family violence advocate and must address safety issues.

### **Child Under 12 Weeks of Age**

All DWP job seekers are required to develop and comply with an Employment Plan and to participate in DWP ES, **except** a caregiver who is a member of a 2-parent family and has a child less than 12 weeks of age. This is a once in a lifetime exception and can only be used if the family has not previously used the MFIP child under 1 year of age or the child under 12 weeks of age exception.

A caregiver who is granted a child under 12 weeks exemption must be referred to DWP ES within 10 days after the child reaches 12 weeks of age. The caregiver must develop and sign an Employment Plan in order to comply with DWP ES requirements.

Caregivers with a child under 12 weeks of age who are required to participate in DWP ES should also be given special consideration. For example, an Employment Plan for a job seeker who has a child less than 12 weeks of age, could include health-related activities for mother and child or activities associated with providing care to a newborn. When developing the Employment Plan, the employment counselor should discuss work focused activities and address child care, as well as health and social services activities with the job seeker.

---

### Unlikely to Benefit Determinations

Because DWP is a short term, 4-month program, some job seekers with significant health issues may not be able to receive the full benefits DWP has to offer. DWP allows job seekers who meet any of the following “unlikely to benefit” categories to leave DWP early and be converted to the MFIP program.

The “unlikely to benefit” categories are:

- ▶ The job seeker is determined by a qualified medical professional to be unable to obtain or retain employment due to an illness, injury or incapacity that is expected to last 60 or more days.
- ▶ The job seeker is required in the home to care for a family member with an illness, injury or incapacity that is expected to last 60 or more days, as certified by a qualified medical professional.
- ▶ The job seeker is determined by a qualified medical professional to be needed in the home to care for a child or adult meeting the Special Medical Criteria.
- ▶ The job seeker is pregnant and is determined by a qualified medical professional to be unable to work due to the pregnancy.
- ▶ The job seeker has applied for SSI or SSDI because the job seeker has an illness, injury or incapacity that may meet the SSI or SSDI eligibility requirements.

Applicants who meet an unlikely to benefit category are immediately referred to have their eligibility determined for MFIP. For 2-parent families, both parents must meet an exclusion category or unlikely to benefit category when they apply to be immediately referred to MFIP.

The employment counselor or county must allow and assist DWP job seekers who believe they may meet one of the DWP unlikely to benefit categories to obtain the necessary evaluation, medical treatment and documentation. In addition, the time the DWP job seeker needs to spend seeking and receiving a health evaluation must be included as an allowable activity in the job seeker’s Employment Plan.

The employment counselor or county should discuss with the job seeker the fact that conversion to MFIP will result in the months on assistance counting toward the 60-month time limit. A job seeker has the option of declining to seek an unlikely to benefit determination, and may remain in DWP through the 4-month period. However, once a job

seeker has been determined unlikely to benefit the case must be converted to MFIP. For 2-parent families, both parents must meet the unlikely to benefit (or exclusion) criteria to be converted to MFIP.

The employment counselor and county should notify one another when a job seeker has been determined unlikely to benefit. The financial and Employment Services cases must be converted to MFIP.

For more information about Employment Plans, see ES Manual Sections:

- ▶ §3.8.10 Functions of an Employment Plan
- ▶ §3.8.20 Goals of an Employment Plan
- ▶ §3.8.30 Work Activities
- ▶ §3.8.40 Employment Plans for Victims of Family Violence

**STRUCTURED AND INTENSIVE JOB SEARCH****D.3.8**

---

A key feature of the Diversionary Work Program (DWP) is the intensity of Employment Services. For most job seekers, this will mean participation in structured and intensive job search activities.

Job search is difficult for anyone, and even more difficult for inexperienced job seekers. Because DWP is short term (up to 4 months), early engagement in a structured and intensive job search is important in order to provide the job seeker with a greater opportunity to be successful. For these reasons counties and ES providers are encouraged to implement structured and intensive job search for most, if not all, DWP job seekers.

**What is Structured and Intensive Job Search?**

Structured job search is more a philosophical approach than a single model for helping job seekers develop the skills to successfully find and keep a job. In general, structured job search is a continuum of organized, intensive, and supervised activities that help identify work skills, develop soft skills, build confidence, coach, and provide peer support. Expectations for job seekers in job search activities should parallel expectations they will encounter in real life employment.

The intensity of the job search activity relates to the number of hours a job seeker participates in the activity. Under DWP, the expectation is that most Employment Plans are full time plans. Like MFIP, full time under DWP is defined as up to 35 hours per week. For many DWP job seekers who are not working, Employment Plans will include full time participation in a structured job search program.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Some DWP job seekers will have activities in their Employment Plans that address barriers requiring immediate attention, such as securing stable housing. For these job seekers, Employment Plans should allow the job seeker time to address the barriers that require immediate attention as well as hours in structured job search, with the plans' total hours meeting the full time requirement (35 hours/week).

The exception to the full time Employment Plan expectation is for job seekers who have special circumstances that need to be considered.

**Common Features of Structured Job Search**

Most structured job search components include:

- ▶ **Requirement to participate in on-site activities.** Job seekers are expected to treat job search as their job, until they find a job. This means there is significant

## STRUCTURED AND INTENSIVE JOB SEARCH

## D.3.8

---

involvement in structured on-site activities when the job seeker is not interviewing or doing other approved off-site activities. Whenever possible, job seekers should start and end their day at the Employment Services office.

- ▶ **Workplace expectations.** Job seekers are expected to model workplace behavior. Expectations such as appropriate dress, timeliness, and engaged participation should be established and enforced. The job search groups, such as job club, usually help to develop and enforce these expectations.
- ▶ **Skill building workshops.** Skill building workshops cover a wide variety of topics under the umbrella of “job seeking and keeping skills”. Suggested workshop topics include:
  - Preparation for job search and work activities such as organizing child care and transportation, and identifying a support network for the job seeker.
  - Skills identification, including soft skills, work history, and basic skills testing, if appropriate.
  - Job seeking skills, including how to fill out applications, how to write a resume, networking, cold calling, and job fairs.
  - Job retention skills including attendance, conflict management, diversity, employee rights, and career advancement. And,
  - Life skills such as budgeting, taxes, stress management, and parenting.
- ▶ **Job club.** Job club is generally the daily group meeting that job seekers must attend after completing workshops, or in combination with attendance at workshops. Job club meetings are often used to discuss the successes and difficulties job seekers encountered during their daily job search; to share job leads; to provide group support. Documentation of the day’s job search activities can be turned in at this meeting, and form the basis for both the group discussion as well as the plan for the next day’s job search. The level of structure in the job club varies greatly and can be tailored to meet the needs of the MFIP job seekers in your county.
- ▶ **Frequent evaluation of progress and feedback to the job seeker.** Consistent, constructive feedback on progress and assistance with ongoing planning are critical pieces of structured job search. This can happen during daily check-ins, job club,

**STRUCTURED AND INTENSIVE JOB SEARCH****D.3.8**

---

and/or individual meetings with a job counselor. This will require adequate staffing by the Employment Services Provider staff.

In general, successful structured job search programs offer a variety of hard and soft skills training, as well as regular job club and networking opportunities. Requirements and expectations parallel as closely as possible the work environment and the expectations job seekers will encounter when they begin working. Job seekers are required to engage actively in specific activities for the full number of hours specified in their plan. Structured job search effectively becomes the job seeker's "job" until paid employment is found. Operating an effective structured job search component has the potential to improve the effectiveness of skill and needs assessments, help staff develop more effective Employment Plans and increase accountability.

**DWP and MFIP Job Search**

Each county is expected to operate a job search program for MFIP as well as DWP. In many locations DWP and MFIP job search programs will be provided by the same Employment Services Provider at the same location, and quite possibly, by the same staff. Where this is the case, the recommendation is, to the extent possible, to design the job search programs to minimize any differences between the 2 designs and maximize similarities. For both MFIP and DWP, the recommended job search design is both structured and intensive.



**TRANSITION TO MFIP AFTER 4-MONTH DWP PERIOD**

**D.3.9**

---

The job counselor should review the progress the job seeker is making throughout the 4-month DWP period. If, toward the end of the 4-month DWP period, it appears that the job seeker may benefit from receiving assistance under MFIP, the job counselor should discuss the possibility of MFIP eligibility and benefits with the job seeker.

The job counselor should refer the job seeker to the county if the job seeker expresses interest in applying for MFIP. Whenever possible, the referral to the county should be made before the end of the 4-month DWP period.

In addition, the job counselor should inform job seekers that they can apply for MFIP at any time after the 4-month DWP period ends.



---

### Failure to Comply with Program Requirements

The definition of compliance for the purposes of DWP is essentially the same as it is for MFIP. DWP job seekers are required to comply with Employment Services, including complying with the terms of his or her Employment Plan, as well as child support enforcement. Cooperation with child support means working with child support to establish paternity and pursuing established child support court orders so that a family can receive child support benefits.

#### Disqualification (Case Closure)

When a job seeker is non-compliant and does not have good cause, the consequences are **not** the same as MFIP. Rather than apply a sanction, **the county financial worker will close the family's DWP case**. For a 2-parent family, if 1 or both parents is out of compliance, the financial worker will close the case.

Prior to closure, apply all MFIP notice of adverse action and appeal provisions, except that when there is an appeal; do **not** continue benefits beyond the 4-month DWP period. No Notice of Intent to Sanction (NOITS) is required, however the financial worker should indicate the reason the case is disqualified on the 10Day Notice of Adverse Action. **Note:** While the case is closed, the DWP consecutive 4-month period continues to run.

**Regaining Eligibility after Initial Disqualification:** Unlike MFIP, which has a 1-month minimum sanction requirement, the DWP statute does not include a minimum length of time the case must be closed due to non-compliance.

To regain DWP eligibility after an initial disqualification, a job seeker must comply with the terms of her or his EP (or cooperate with Child Support). Since DWP is a short-term program, it is important that job seekers do not remain disqualified for an extended period of time. The county and ES provider should work to re-engage the disqualified job seeker in Employment Services as soon as possible, so the job seeker can regain eligibility and continue receiving DWP benefits and services.

**Regaining Eligibility after Subsequent Disqualification:** If the same job seeker fails to comply with his or her EP a 2nd time and becomes disqualified again, the county should attempt a home visit to determine whether the disqualified job seeker may have other barriers to participation that were not evident when the job seeker was participating in DWP Employment Services. If it is determined that such barriers exist, the job counselor should modify the job seeker's Employment Plan to include activities that address the job seeker's particular circumstances. When the job seeker agrees to the revised Employment Plan, the

**NON-COMPLIANCE****D.5.1**

---

employment counselor should notify the county that the job seeker is cooperating with Employment Services so DWP eligibility can be reinstated.

However, if no barriers are determined the definition of compliance with Employment Services may differ from the previous determination, which was driven in part by the desire to have the job seeker re-engage in DWP Employment Services as quickly as possible. For example, with the 1st disqualification, a county may simply require the job seeker to start attending job search again to regain eligibility for DWP. However, when the job seeker is disqualified a 2nd time for failing to attend job search sessions, the county may decide that the job seeker must make up all of the missed days or job search workshops before regaining eligibility.

Compliance expectations should be reasonable, applied equitably, and support the program goal of engaging people in work and improving family stability within the 4-month program. Counties should develop guidance for Employment Services Providers to ensure that all job seekers are treated equitably. But the county's may not develop a policy which sets a specific length of time a case must remain disqualified.

A job seeker remains disqualified from DWP until the job seeker complies with all program requirements. There is no minimum or maximum amount of time the case must be closed. The employment counselor must notify the county when a job seeker is determined to be in compliance. If the job seeker complies within the 4-month DWP period, the county will issue DWP benefits to the family unit. The county will prorate the benefits from the date of compliance/cooperation.

The county will require the family to complete a new CAF if the family has been disqualified from DWP for any length of time.

**GOOD CAUSE****D.5.2**

---

Good cause provisions under DWP are the same as under MFIP, see §5.3 (Good Cause for Non-Compliance) in the ES Manual. Good cause must be considered before disqualifying a family unit, including giving consideration to the role any known disability may have had on the job seeker's ability to comply with his or her Employment Plan and child support requirements.

DO NOT disqualify a job seeker if the non-compliance is associated with a job seeker's disability. Instead, the employment counselor and job seeker should review the job seeker's Employment Plan and revise it as necessary to accommodate the situation.



IMPACT ON OTHER PROGRAMS

D.5.3

---

A family unit disqualified from DWP is ineligible for MFIP benefits until the end of the 4 consecutive month DWP eligibility period. Non-compliance under DWP does not affect the family's eligibility for MFIP once the 4-month DWP period has ended.

A family unit disqualified from DWP **may continue to receive** Food Support or health care benefits, provided the family meets the requirements of those programs. However, the family unit is **not** eligible for MFIP/DWP Child Care Assistance while disqualified from DWP.



**DWP ASSISTANCE STANDARDS****APPENDIX D.A**

---

The maximum monthly benefit amount available under DWP is the difference between the unit's needs, such as family maintenance needs and personal needs allowances, and the unit's countable income, not to exceed the cash portion of the MFIP standard of need. For details about a particular case, contact the financial worker.

# Eligible People	TRANSITIONAL STANDARD Cash Portion
1	\$ 250
2	\$ 437
3	\$ 532
4	\$ 621
5	\$ 697
6	\$ 773
7	\$ 850
8	\$ 916
9	\$ 980
10	\$1,035
Each add'l person	\$ 53

  

# Eligible People	SHARED HOUSEHOLD STANDARD Cash Portion
1	\$ 225
2	\$ 393
3	\$ 479
4	\$ 559
5	\$ 627
6	\$ 696
7	\$ 765
8	\$ 824
9	\$ 882
10	\$ 932
Each add'l person	\$ 48 (approx.)



## DHS Regional Teams for MFIP and DWP

## Appendix D.F

The following list identifies the regional consultants for each of the four regions of the state. Unless otherwise noted or communicated, counties within each region should contact one of the consultants listed to support that region for any questions, issues, concerns, requests for consultation, etc., related to MFIP or DWP.

**Northwest:** Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Marshall, Morrison, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Roseau, Stevens, Todd, Traverse, Wadena, Wilkin

<u>Regional Consultants:</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Linda Foster	651-296-0179	<a href="mailto:linda.foster@state.mn.us">linda.foster@state.mn.us</a>
Jim Olson	651-296-4479	<a href="mailto:jim.olson@state.mn.us">jim.olson@state.mn.us</a>
Bruce Borgh (DEED)	651-296-1826	<a href="mailto:bruce.borgh@state.mn.us">bruce.borgh@state.mn.us</a>

**Northeast:** Aitken, Carlton, Chisago, Cook, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lake, Mille Lacs, Pine, St. Louis

<u>Regional Consultants:</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Dianne Brown	651-297-4666	<a href="mailto:dianne.brown@state.mn.us">dianne.brown@state.mn.us</a>
Steve Gies	651-297-1427	<a href="mailto:steve.gies@state.mn.us">steve.gies@state.mn.us</a>
Marilyn Leonard	651-296-9369	<a href="mailto:marilyn.leonard@state.mn.us">marilyn.leonard@state.mn.us</a>
Bruce Borgh (DEED)	651-296-1826	<a href="mailto:bruce.borgh@state.mn.us">bruce.borgh@state.mn.us</a>

**Southeast:** Anoka, Benton, Carver, Dakota, Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Hennepin, Houston, Goodhue, Mower, Olmsted, Ramsey, Rice, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Stearns, Steele, Wabasha, Washington, Winona, Wright

<u>Regional Consultants: *</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Sheryl Lockwood	651-296-1386	<a href="mailto:sheryl.lockwood@state.mn.us">sheryl.lockwood@state.mn.us</a>
Mayjoua Ly	651-282-9817	<a href="mailto:mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us">mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us</a>
Joan Truhler	651-297-5385	<a href="mailto:joan.truhler@state.mn.us">joan.truhler@state.mn.us</a>
Linda Smith (DEED)	651-297-1372	<a href="mailto:lsmith@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us">lsmith@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us</a>

\* Joan Truhler is the primary consultant for Anoka, Benton, Carver, Hennepin, Scott, Sherburne and Stearns Counties.

\*Sheryl Lockwood, Mayjoua Ly and Linda Smith are the primary consultants for all other counties in the southeast region.

**Southwest:** Big Stone, Blue Earth, Brown, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Kandiyohi, La Qui Parle, LeSueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sibley, Swift, Waseca, Watonwan, Yellow Medicine

<u>Regional Consultants:</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Pam Reinstatler	651-296-9407	<a href="mailto:pam.reinstatler@state.mn.us">pam.reinstatler@state.mn.us</a>
Randy Rennich	651-296-1834	<a href="mailto:randy.rennich@state.mn.us">randy.rennich@state.mn.us</a>
Linda Smith (DEED)	651-297-1372	<a href="mailto:lsmith@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us">lsmith@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us</a>

