Successful Life Project

TOPIC
The Successful Life Project provides individualized and consultative clinical support to persons identified in the Jensen Settlement Agreement, their teams, and other persons with severe behavioral challenges including persons who live in the same home as persons identified in the Jensen Settlement Agreement.

PURPOSE
Provide information about the Successful Life Project and ongoing follow-up of persons identified in the Jensen Settlement Agreement, their teams, and other persons with severe behavioral challenges. This Bulletin replaces Bulletin #19-48-01.

CONTACT
Submit questions to SuccessfulLifeProject.dhs@state.mn.us

SIGNED
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TERMINOLOGY NOTICE
The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.
I. Background

A. Jensen Settlement Agreement

The *Jensen Settlement Agreement (PDF)* is the result of a lawsuit filed against the Department of Human Services (the Department) in 2009, alleging that residents of the former Minnesota Extended Treatment Options (METO) program were unlawfully and unconstitutionally secluded and restrained. The Settlement Agreement allowed the Department and the plaintiffs to resolve the claims in a mutually agreeable manner, and was intended to bring significant improvements to the care and treatment of persons with developmental and other disabilities in the state of Minnesota.

On September 4, 2020, US District Court Judge Donovan Frank, the judge who oversaw the *Jensen* Case, issued an order finding that DHS had substantially complied with all requirements of the *Jensen* Settlement Agreement, and on October 25, 2020, the court’s jurisdiction over the *Jensen* Settlement Agreement ended.

Additional information on the *Jensen* Settlement Agreement is on the DHS website at [Person-Centered Practices, Positive Supports and the *Jensen* Settlement Agreement](https://www2.dhs.state.mn.us/managedcare/personcentered-practices-positive-supports-and-the-jensen-settlement-agreement).

B. Closure of MSHS-Cambridge Program

The Department officially closed the Minnesota Extended Treatment Options (METO) program on June 30, 2011. The Minnesota Specialty Health System (MSHS)-Cambridge replaced the METO program. As part of the Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Department agreed to close MSHS-Cambridge, which it did in 2014. At the same time, Minnesota Life Bridge began providing treatment services to persons in homes integrated within Minnesota communities.

[**DHS Bulletin #20-21-08 (PDF)**](https://www2.dhs.state.mn.us/managedcare/mshs-cambridge-program) provides additional information on the Minnesota Life Bridge program.

II. Successful Life Project

The Successful Life Project is part of Quality Assurance and Disability Compliance Services. The Successful Life Project team includes board certified behavior analysts, a registered nurse and a licensed social worker. The Successful Life Project provides individualized and consultative clinical support to persons identified in the *Jensen* Settlement Agreement, their teams, and other persons with severe behavioral challenges including persons who live in the same home as persons identified in the *Jensen* Settlement Agreement.

The services Successful Life Project provides help to prevent re-institutionalization and support people to live in the community of their choice. This includes helping the person’s care providers use person-centered, positive behavior supports and addressing health or medical needs. These services can help improve a person’s overall quality of life.
A. Successful Life Project Services and Supports

The Successful Life Project helps build capacity for support teams and providers to deliver individualized, person-centered positive behavior supports. Based on the needs of the person and their team, supports can include:

- Assessments to determine:
  - Presence of any significant risk factors
  - Health and medical needs including medication reviews
  - Function of behavior(s) (Functional Behavior Assessment)
  - Safety, quality of life, and person-centered positive behavior supports
- Data collection and analysis support
- Person-centered plan assistance
- Positive behavior support plan development
- Training
- Transition planning support

When behaviors are interfering with life activities and community inclusion, Successful Life Project staff works with teams to identify circumstances that may be contributing to interfering behaviors and assists teams in developing strategies to increase quality of life. When behaviors are not interfering with life activities, Successful Life Project staff assists teams by focusing on the next steps necessary to improve the person’s quality of life.

B. Levels of Support

To provide people and their teams with the appropriate level of support, the Successful Life Project groups people based on the level of support needed. Group assignments are fluid, and people can and do move between support levels, based on the person’s needs at the time. The different support levels are as follows:

1. Priority

- The person is presenting complex behavior and has a potential loss of residential services/home. The Successful Life Project bases priority status on the challenges presented by the person’s behavior support needs and the capacity of the person’s team; or
- The person demonstrates presence of significant risk factors. The Successful Life Project defines “Risk Factors” as conditions or circumstances that could create a behavioral or medical crisis as determined by the Risk Assessment (See Section IV below.); and
- The team accepts Successful Life Project support.
2. Secondary

- The person is presenting complex behavior support needs but potential loss of their residential service/home is not threatened; and
- The team accepts Successful Life Project support.

3. Proactive Plus

- The person’s provider(s) or any other member of their team needs technical assistance.

4. Proactive

- Other persons identified in the Jensen Settlement Agreement and people previously served at MSHS-Cambridge NOT receiving Priority, Secondary or Proactive Plus level of support.

Services offered to Priority and Secondary groups include:

- Assisting with person-centered planning
- Assisting with transition planning
- Completing a functional behavior assessment
- Conducting health assessment
- Conducting medication review
- Conducting regional workshops targeting local needs
- Conducting stress management instructional workshops
- Developing positive behavior supports
- Mentoring providers
- Providing diagnosis-specific technical assistance
- Providing health education
- Reviewing support plans
- Training that targets identified needs

Services offered to the Proactive Plus group include:

- Assisting in identifying the best environment for the person to live
- Mentoring providers
- Providing technical assistance

Services offered to the Proactive group include:

- Monitoring Behavior Incident Report Forms
- Monitoring 245D Service Terminations
III. Successful Life Project Intake Process for Initiation of Priority, Secondary or Proactive Plus Support

After receiving a DHS-4158 Behavior Incident Reporting Form (BIRF) and/or 245D Service Termination, for a person identified in the Jensen Settlement Agreement, the Successful Life Project supervisor follows up with the person’s case manager, to see if the Successful Life Project could provide any support. If the case manager determines that support is needed, Successful Life Project supervisor begins the intake process. A case manager, provider or guardian can also request support directly from the Successful Life Project to begin the intake process.

After Successful Life Project receives a referral or request for support, the Successful Life Project supervisor gathers relevant information about the person, assigns clinician(s) from the Successful Life Project to follow up with the referral or request, and sends a DHS-6873 Authorization for Release of Information for the Successful Life Project, to the person or their legal representative.

Upon receipt of the signed DHS-6873 Authorization for Release of Information, the assigned Successful Life Project clinician(s) contact the case manager or provider to set up a consultation with the person’s team. After the consultation, the Successful Life Project clinician(s) develop recommendations for the team on how to address their concerns.

The Successful Life Project clinician(s) send the recommendations to the team and asks the team for their review. If the team wants to move forward, the team signs the Successful Life Project Support Agreement and individualized supports begin.

IV. How does the Successful Life Project get involved for people in the Proactive group?

For persons not receiving Priority, Secondary or Proactive Plus supports, the Successful Life Project can become involved with a person’s team in a number of ways, including:

- Calls by the Successful Life Project supervisor to case managers after receiving a DHS-5148 Behavior Intervention Reporting Form (BIRF).
- Referral from a residential provider, case manager, guardian or other involved party.
- Assignment by the Department’s Single Point of Entry (See Section V. below) for follow-up.
- Review of licensing investigation reports.
- Review of reports received by Quality Assurance and Disability Compliance Services or the Successful Life Project from the Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities.
- Review of 245D Services Termination Notices.
V. Coordination of Successful Life Project Services

To improve service coordination across the Department, the Successful Life Project staff participate in the Department’s Single Point of Entry triage team. The DHS Single Point of Entry is a process that coordinates crisis resolution responses for people with developmental disabilities and related conditions. 

[DHS Bulletin #20-21-08 (PDF)](DHS Bulletin #20-21-08 (PDF)) contains additional information on the Single Point of Entry.

Questions

Contact the Successful Life Project at [SuccessfulLifeProject.dhs@state.mn.us](mailto:SuccessfulLifeProject.dhs@state.mn.us)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 431-3378 (voice) or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency’s ADA coordinator.