

2024-2025 County and Tribal Nation MFIP Biennial Service Agreement

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2025

Enter the county or tribal nation's unique ID number

16COO953

*Required field

Contact Information

COUNTY/CONSORTIUM NAME

Cook

PLAN YEAR

2024-2025

*CONTACT PERSON

Allison Plummer

*TITLE

Financial Assistance Supervisor

*ADDRESS

411 W 2nd St

*CITY

Grand Marais

*STATE

MN

*ZIP CODE

55604

*PHONE NUMBER

218-387-3627

*EMAIL ADDRESS (where correspondence related to this form will be sent)

allison.plummer@co.cook.mn.us

*CONFIRM EMAIL ADDRESS

allison.plummer@co.cook.mn.us



Note: Please review Bulletin #23-11-02: 2024-2025 Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Biennial Service Agreement (BSA) Guidelines for more details before you complete this document.

A. Needs Statement

1. Identify challenges in financial assistance that are prohibiting you from properly serving MFIP/DWP families in your community.

Due to the remoteness and smaller population of Cook County, the biggest challenges we currently face are related to limited resources to assist our MFIP and DWP caregivers to achieving self-sufficiency. Thus, we see the same families continue to receive assistance and rely on MFIP and DWP month after month.

These limited resources include access to mental health services, recovery services, childcare, and affordable housing. Paired with reduced mental health services are limited services for recovery. With one outpatient treatment provider and no inpatient providers in the county, there are not many options for individuals needing assistance while recovering from substance use disorders. This can all greatly affect FSS caregivers who rely on these services to be offered locally to reduce travel and to acquire the assistance needed to perhaps return to non-FFS status.

Our county also has few childcare providers, with only 5 licensed providers servicing the entire county. And with licensing limits in regard to the ages and number of children that one provider may take, this has created a shortage in needed childcare spots, particularly for infants, for parents to start and/or continue working while raising young children. The childcare providers are also not available late into the evening or on weekends which creates a burden on hospitality workers that need care for children outside of the "normal" 8am-5pm workday.

Affordable housing is also a concern, with only one family-friendly subsidized housing unit available in the county. For families that reside in subsidized housing, this can help reduce their monthly shelter expenses. For families that must locate non-subsidized housing, and the higher cost of rent driven by our tourism-based economy and lack of non-vacation rental homes, this can create a burden of high monthly shelter expenses.

Due to the lack of the above-mentioned resources and services in our community, it can be difficult for MFIP and DWP caregivers to reach self-sufficiency and exit these programs.

7947 characters remaining

2. * I identify challenges in employment services that are prohibiting you from properly serving MFIP/DWP families in your community.

Cook County is seeing two large challenges facing employment services, dependent on the specific population.

For families with young children, especially infants, childcare is the biggest challenge. As mentioned in question 1, there is a lack of available childcare in the county. Due to licensing restrictions on the ages and total number of children that a provider may watch, this has created a high need for infant spots as those spots are the most restrictive and the fewest available. With a high need for infant and toddler spots for these young families paired with very limited availability, many families have been unable to accept or continue employment as no one is available to watch their children.

For families with older children or where childcare is not a barrier to employment, the biggest challenge is the lack of year-round, full-time, livable wage employment opportunities. Cook County is a tourism-driven economy with retail sales, hospitality, and food service accounting for over half of public and private sector jobs. Because of the size and remoteness of our county, it is challenging for MFIP and DWP clients to perform required job search and employment activities. Given the high cost of living in our community, most MFIP and DWP caregivers remain on assistance due to the challenge of finding long-term employment that provides a living wage.

As a Community Action Agency, Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) intrinsically is currently not facing any challenges that prohibit us from serving the MFIP/DWP families in our communities. Participants enrolled in MFIP/DWP services face wide-reaching challenges to engage in MFIP/DWP services in the rural areas due to: Limits on transportation that is available, childcare availability and affordability, safe and affordable housing, and internet services/technology challenges. In addition, participants struggling with mental, chemical, and physical health challenges face compounding barriers accessing necessary and often extensive services in rural areas. These are a few challenges identified that present additional barriers for the MFIP/DWP participants. Recognizing that MFIP/DWP funding is limited, AEOA proactively pursues additional funding from sources such as the Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development, Community Services Block Grant, Minnesota Community Action Grant, Public Foundations, AEOA Foundation Fund, Blandin Foundation, and other available and appropriate sources of funding to address the evolving challenges facing this population.

7431 characters remaining

3. * I identify the strengths in your community that you are most proud of that benefit MFIP/DWP families.

Although our community has certain limited resources, as mentioned above, we do see an abundance of other resources that support families enrolled in MFIP and DWP.

Sawtooth Mountain Clinic is a Federal Qualified Health Center (FQHC) located in Grand Marais and Grand Portage Health Services are the only healthcare providers located in the county. Besides offering vital and comprehensive health services for families, they provide other key programs for families. These key programs include Women, Infants, And Children (WIC), Child and Teen Checkups, Family Home Visiting, and pre-natal and parenting education classes. In partnership with another local non-profit agency and the creation of the Oral Health Task Force, the clinic can help provide free dental care to children in Cook County. Over the last year, community health and service providers have hired more community support and peer specialists. This also includes forming peer support groups like Growing Families that provide the opportunity for families to connect through pregnancy, birth, and postpartum stages.

Other local resources include the county's only outpatient treatment program, Wilderness Outpatient Treatment Program, partnered with and located in Cook County Public Health and Human Services office. This program provides vital services for those seeking and in recovery from

substance use disorder. The local Violence Prevention Center (VPC) provides services for people that have been or are currently victims of domestic violence. The VPC works with the employment services counselor from AEOA when developing employment plans that have a domestic/family violence waiver. A domestic violence advocate is also available with Grand Portage and the MN Chippewa Tribe.

Our community boasts a strong volunteer-driven network of nutritional supports. Programs such as Ruby's Pantry, Snack and Packs, the local Farmer's Market, and our food shelf all offer opportunities for individuals and families to access additional food.

Lastly, the Cook County Community YMCA has been a great strength for individuals and families. The YMCA provides many amenities and benefits including a gym, swimming pool, childcare center, health promotions, prevention programs, personal training, fitness classes, children's programs (ex. dance, soccer, gymnastics, swim lessons), and family activities (ex. Halloween event, Healthy Kids Day).

Provided by AEOA:

- Adult Basic Education provided service to 31 Cook County residents. This could include basic skills improvement, GED preparation, college and career readiness, employment skills, digital literacy, life skills, and English language learning.

- Last year, approximately 14 people who were low-income, on public assistance, or were displaced workers were assisted with employment-related needs.

- AEOA's Energy Assistance Program provided support to 178 households with primary heat funds, 87 households with crisis funds, 4 households with emergency water benefits, and 6 households with furnace repair/replacements.

- Last year, weatherization services were provided to 3 homes in Cook County.

- Arrowhead RSVP had 50 volunteers who donated over 2,723 hours, serving 9 Cook County non-profits, encompassing the full spectrum of helping seniors to remain living at home to providing food support.

- RSVP Bone Builders in Cook County had 2 sites with 6 volunteers who served 22 hours leading Bone Builders classes for 24 participants.

- Senior Nutrition provided 9,384 nutritious meals to seniors, roughly averaging 37 meals per day. Of those meals, 5,135 were delivered to older people who are homebound.

- The Food Shelf served 1,791 individuals, providing over 39,740 pounds of food to 306 visitors in the calendar year 2022.

- Arrowhead Transit provided 11,204 rides to Cook County passengers, totaling 63,342 miles.

- The Volunteer Driver Program had 5 volunteers and provided 14 rides.

Serving MFIP/DWP families is a community endeavor that requires collaborative efforts across MFIP/DWP service providers and providers outside of this group. For over 56 years AEOA has worked to provide opportunities and resources for those with limited resources. As a Community Action Agency, AEOA conducts a comprehensive community needs assessment every 3 years to ensure that we understand how people in poverty are faring, and we design programming to provide relevant opportunities for those experiencing social and economic opportunities. AEOA staff have this information behind the services and support that we offer. Having this knowledge helps direct the focus, increase collaboration, and avoid duplication of effort. We have included the link to our most recent Community Needs Assessment in our responses as an FYI:

https://www.aeo.org/images/Central/Reports/2021_Community_Needs_Assessment.pdf.

Information in the Community Needs Assessment reviews the needs in the following key areas: Quality of life and basic needs, housing, health, transportation, employment, and education.

4988 characters remaining

A. Needs Statement (continued)

4. What strengths and resources do you have available to address the needs of your participants?

Please check all the resources available to participants in your service area and check whether the resource is available within MFIP financial or employment services "in-house" or from a partner organization (County/Tribal Nation resources with developed connections to MFIP), and/or an external community resource or both. If you lack the resources in your service area, check the Resource Gaps column. Add any "other" resources that you consider necessary.

MFIP Resources	Partner Resources	Community Resources	Resource Gaps	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ABE/GED
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult/elder services
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Career planning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childcare funds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chemical health services
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer lab access
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit counseling/financial literacy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	English Language Learner (ELL)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Food shelf
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job club
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job development
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job retention
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job search workshops
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental health services
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On-the-job training program
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Post-secondary education planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Re-entry support
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-term training
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported work / paid work experience
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation assistance (gas cards, bus cards)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vehicle repair funds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Veteran Services Support
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer opportunities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Youth program
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="text"/>

5. County/Tribal Nation Program Contact Information

Please name contacts for the following programs if different from the contact on the cover page. You only need to give a person's phone and email once.

*MFIP EMPLOYMENT SERVICES STAFF CONTACT NAME	*PHONE NUMBER	*EMAIL ADDRESS
n/a	000-000-0000	allison.plummer@co.cook.mn.us

*DWP STAFF CONTACT NAME	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
n/a		

*FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES STAFF CONTACT NAME	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
n/a		

A. Needs Statement (continued)

6. Employment Services Provider(s) Information

MN Statute 256J.50, Subdivision 8: Each county, or group of counties working cooperatively, must make available to participants the choice of at least two employment and training service providers as defined under MN Statute 256J.49, Subdivision 4, except in counties contracting with workforce centers that use multiple employment and training services or that offer multiple services options under a collaborative effort and can document that participants have choice among employment and training services designed to meet specialized needs.

List your current employment services provider(s) and check the respective box to indicate which population served. If a Workforce Center is the only employment services provider, list the multiple employment and training services among which participants can choose. Section I of this form addresses provider choice.

NAME	ADDRESS	
AEOA	300 W 3rd St, Grand Marais, MN 55604	
CONTACT PERSON	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL
Theresa Luther-Dolan	218-264-9593	theresa.luther-dolan@aeoa.org
Population Served	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MFIP ES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DWP ES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FSS <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Parents <input type="checkbox"/> 200% FPG <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

NAME	ADDRESS	
Minnesota Chippewa Tribe	130 W Superior St, Suite 410, Duluth, MN 55802	
CONTACT PERSON	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL
Jim Croud	218-722-0472	jcroud@mnchippewatribe.org
Population Served	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MFIP ES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DWP ES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FSS <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Parents <input type="checkbox"/> 200% FPG <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

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		<input type="checkbox"/> Other

B. Service Models

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and the Diversionary Work Program (DWP)

1. *What strategies do you use for hard-to-engage participants? *Check all that apply.*

- Home visits
 Sanction outreach services
 Off-site meeting opportunities
 Incentives – specify:
 Virtual appointments
 Workforce One Connect app
 Other – specify:

2. *What types of job development do you do? *Check all that apply.*

- Sector job development
 Individual job development
 Other – specify:

3. *Do you have an ongoing job development partnership or sector based job development with community employers to help participants with employment?

- No
 Yes – check all activities employer provides:
 Interview opportunities
 Job skills training
 Job placement
 Job shadowing
 On-site job training
 Work experience
 Helps plan training programs
 Other – specify: Cook County Higher Education provides assistance with job search, resumes, and interview skills.

4. *Do you provide the following services to prepare participants for work?

- No
 Yes – check all that apply:
 Transportation
 Soft skills training
 Financial planning
 Mentoring
 Other – specify:

5. *Do you provide job retention services to employed participants while they are receiving MFIP?

- No
 Yes – check all that apply and answer the follow up question below:
 Available to assist with issues that develop on the job
 Financial planning
 Soft skills training
 Mentoring
 Transportation
 Personal contact with the employee HOW OFTEN?
 Other – specify:

If yes, how long do you provide job retention services?

- Less than 3 months
 3-6 months
 7-12 months
 More than one year

6. *Do you provide job advancement services to employed participants?

- No
 Yes – check all that apply:
 Career laddering
 Networking
 Coaching/mentoring
 Ongoing job search
 Education/training
 Other – specify:

7. *Do you utilize any career pathways programs or skill assessment and credentialing programs for your participants?

- No
 Yes – check all that apply:
 Pathways to Prosperity (P2P)
 Work Keys
 National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)
 Other – specify: iseek.org and onetonline.org

B. Service Models (continued)

Family Stabilization Services (FSS)

1. *Do you have qualified professionals available to assist with FSS cases in your service area who meet the licensure and accreditation requirements below?

No Yes – check all that apply:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensed physician | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physician assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced practice registered nurse |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physical therapist | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupational therapist | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensed social worker |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Licensed psychologist | <input type="checkbox"/> Certified school psychologist | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mental health professional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certified psychometrist | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: <input type="text"/> | |

2. *Do you make referrals for children of FSS participants?

No Yes – check all that apply:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children’s Mental Health Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Health Nurse home visiting services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child Wellness Check-ups |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Follow Along Program | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: <input type="text"/> | | |

3. *Are any of these services for children offered to non-FSS families?

No Yes

Services for families under 200% of Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG)

1. *Do you serve families not receiving MFIP/DWP that are under 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG)?

No Yes

DESCRIBE

Potential eligibility with the Minnesota Family Resiliency Partnership and Dislocated Worker Prgm

2. *Do you provide services to families who have exited MFIP/DWP or families at risk of receiving MFIP or the Diversionary Work Program (DWP), but are under 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG)?

No Yes – check all the services that apply:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child care | <input type="checkbox"/> Job retention services | <input type="checkbox"/> GED | <input type="checkbox"/> ABE/ELL classes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Job postings | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer lab access | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support services | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/vehicle repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: <input type="text"/> | | | |

If yes, how long do you provide these services?

Up to 3 months 6 months 12 months Other – specify:

3. *Do you provide services to Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs) that are under 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG)?

No Yes

Describe below, including how many NCPs you are currently serving:

Potential eligibility with SNAP 100 and Minnesota Family Resiliency Partnership programs

4. *Describe the process you have in place to verify income below 200% FPG for participants that are not on MFIP or DWP.

We use information located on a MAXIS case, if applicable. Self-attestation is also accepted for certain programs.

B. Service Models (continued)

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Services for Teen Parents

1. **Are there specialized workers who work primarily with teens?*

No Yes – check all that apply for each age group:

Minors (under age 18)	Age 18/19	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial worker
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment service worker
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social worker
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public health nurse
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child care worker
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child protection worker
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other job role – specify: <input style="width: 500px;" type="text"/>

2. **Is there a single point of contact for teens, that is, one staff with primary responsibility for keeping in contact with the teen, working with the teen, and making connections to other services? Respond for each age group separately. If yes for an age group, check the one position that serves this function within that age group.*

No Yes

Minors (under age 18)

- Financial worker
- Employment service worker
- Social worker (Social Services)
- Public health nurse
- Child care worker
- Child protection worker
- Other job role

Age 18/19

- Financial worker
- Employment service worker
- Social worker (Social Services)
- Public health nurse
- Child care worker
- Child protection worker
- Other job role

3. **Does your County/Tribal Nation have an active partnership with the local public health agency to get teen parents enrolled and engaged in public health nurse home visiting services? Check one for each age group.*

Minors (under age 18)

- Yes, mandatory
- Yes, voluntary
- No

Age 18/19

- Yes, mandatory
- Yes, voluntary
- No

C. Addressing Equity

1. *Describe how you are ensuring your services are inclusive and accessible for all.

As a Community Action Agency, AEOA provides opportunities for all people experiencing social and economic challenges working towards self-reliance and/or independence. We offer several programs that help individuals of all ages and their families to meet basic needs, stabilize their lives, and work towards their goals. In 2022, AEOA worked with NorthSpan to develop a 3-year strategic framework that resulted in six strategic directions to guide our work.

2. *How are you working to advance equity in service delivery in your county/Tribal Nation?

Expanding customized staff training to include strategies for understanding poverty in individual choices, community conditions, exploitation, and political/economic structures. Continuation of community assessments to identify and understand our demographics, gaps in services and identify resources to address and determine if a particular program is needed for additional services.

3. *Do you provide equity and diversity training for workers?

- No
- Yes, voluntary
- Yes, mandatory

4. *Do you have culturally specific employment services for different racial/ethnic groups?

- No Yes – check all that apply:
- African American African immigrant American Indian Asian American
- Asian immigrant Hispanic/Latino Newly arrived immigrant

Other – specify: Multi-Race, Non-Somali Black Immigrants

D. Collaboration and Communication with Others

Workforce One

1. *How many Financial Workers have access to Workforce One?
2. *How many Child Care assistance workers have access to Workforce One?
3. *How many support staff have access to Workforce One?

Workforce One Connect App

1. *Does your county/Tribal Nation have the Workforce One Connect app available to participants?
 No – explain:
 Yes – indicate which of the following groups are utilizing the app features in Workforce One:
 Employment services Financial workers Child care workers
 Other – specify:

MAXIS

1. *How many employment services staff have MAXIS access?
2. *How many managers/supervisors have MAXIS access?
3. *Describe the process your service area uses to identify and resolve discrepancies between MAXIS and WF1 data in areas such as Family Stabilization Services coding, employment/hours, sanction status, etc.

Collaboration between county staff and contracted employment services counselors has been vital in identifying and resolving discrepancies. County eligibility workers consult monthly with employment services counselors to review FSS status, participation hours, sanction/extension status and review cases to ensure MAXIS/WF1 information is consistent and identify opportunities to connect families with additional support services.

D. Collaboration and Communication with Others (continued)

Child Care Assistance Program

1. *What strategies does your agency use that involve MFIP and/or Employment Services staff to support timely and consistent receipt of child care assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program? *Check all that apply.*

- Shared electronic document management system
- Regular case consultation meetings
- Workers with dual MFIP and CCAP role
- Workers with dual Employment Services and CCAP role
- Specific CCAP workers process MFIP child care cases
- MFIP and/or Employment Services workers receive training related to CCAP
- Communication with CCAP worker via phone, email or fax
- Use of agency-developed forms or documents
- MFIP and/or Employment Services workers assist families with completing CCAP paperwork (for example, the CCAP application)
- MFIP and/or Employment Services workers have MEC2 Inquiry access
- Other – specify:

2. *What barriers prevent timeliness?

Half of our providers use MEC2 PRO to submit billing information. Based on feedback from childcare staff utilizing MEC2 PRO, they have said the program is confusing and difficult to navigate. Paired with staff turnover and lack of staffing to fill these roles, billing submissions become late and/or incomplete. This has created timeliness issues with getting payment to providers.

Employment service counselors have little knowledge or experience with CCAP. This has made it difficult for our family cash/CCAP worker to communicate effectively with the counselor as to the needs and requirements of the client and getting the needed documentation. Training in CCAP for counselors would be very beneficial as both the counselor and worker could be working together to assist the client specifically for that program.

E. Emergency Services

1. *Does your County/Tribal Nation provide emergency or crisis services from your Consolidated Fund?

- No Yes

2. *Submit a copy of your Emergency Assistance policy as an attachment.

Describe any major changes you've made to this policy below.

None since the 2022-2023 MFIP BSA.

F. Measures

Performance Measures

Performance-based funding is determined by a service area's annualized Self-Support Index value. Review the information and report links in this section to see the effect of performance on funding and reporting, based on Statute 256J.626, subdivision 7.

Each year a bonus to a service area's Consolidated Fund allocation will be based on its performance on the Self-Support Index in the previous April to March year.

The three-year Self-Support Index (S-SI): This measure starts with all adults receiving MFIP or DWP cash assistance in a quarter and tracks what percentage of them, three years later, are no longer receiving family cash assistance or are working an average of 30 hours a week if still receiving cash assistance. Those who left MFIP after reaching 60 counted months and those who left due to 100 percent sanction are only counted as a success if they worked an average of 30 hours per week in their last month of eligibility or if they began receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) after family cash assistance ended. To provide fair comparisons across service areas, DHS calculates a "Range of Expected Performance" for the S-SI that is based on local caseload characteristics and economic conditions. The service area's Self-Support Index value is whether the service area was above, within, or below its expected Range.

The S-SI and Range are annualized for the four quarters in the April through March year ending in the reporting year before the funding year. See the annualized report on the MFIP Reports page on the DHS website for 2023: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4651J-ENG>. A service area with an annualized S-SI "above" its customized Range of Expected Performance for 2023 will receive a 2.5 percent bonus added to its Consolidated Fund allocation for calendar year 2024.

[Minnesota Family Investment Program 2023 Annualized Self-Support Index \(PDF\)](#)

If your service area is receiving a bonus, congratulations! Please share a success strategy here:

n/a

9996 characters remaining

If your service area performed "above" or "within," you can go to Section G.

If your service area performed "below" for two consecutive years, you will have to negotiate a multi-year improvement plan with DHS. If no improvement is shown by the end of the multi-year plan, the next year's allocation must be decreased by 2.5 percent, to remain in effect until the service area performs within or above its Range of Expected Performance.

F. Measures (continued)

Racial/Ethnic Disparities

A racial/ethnic disparity is defined as a one-year Self Support Index that is five or more percentage points lower for a non-white racial/ethnic group than for the white group of MFIP/DWP-eligible adults in the county or consortium. The report "Annualized MFIP Performance Measures by Racial/Ethnic or Immigrant Group and by County, County Consortium, and Tribal Provider" is now available at <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/tyler.borgmann/viz/AnnualizedS-SISuccessRatebyRacialEthnicorImmigrantGroup/SSISuccessRateDashboard-intro>

To view your agency's measurement, click on the "S-SI Success Rate by Agency" button. This will bring you to the statewide data for 2022. From the first drop down you can select your county, county consortium or Tribal Nation. If you note any groups that are below the line (indicated by a green bar) your county, county consortium or Tribal Nation will answer the next question below:

What strategies and action steps for each of the groups below the disparities reference line do you plan to implement for the coming biennium to reduce these disparities?

n/a

G. Program Monitoring and Compliance

1. *What procedures do you have in place to ensure that program funds are being used appropriately as directed in law? *Check all that apply.*

- Budget control procedures for approving expenditures
- Cash management procedures for ensuring program income is used for permitted activities
- Internal policies around use of funds (i.e. participant support services)
- Other – specify:

2. *What procedures do you have in place to ensure program policies are followed and applied accurately? *Check all that apply.*

- Case consultation
- Sample case review by supervisors
- Sample case review by lead worker/mentor
- Sample case reviews by peers
- Other – specify:

3. Effective August 1st, 2023, counties and Tribal Nations are no longer required to administer random drug tests to MFIP participants who are convicted drug felons but may do so at the county or Tribal Nation's option. If applicable, what procedures/policies do you have in place for administering random drug tests to MFIP participants who are convicted drug felons as allowed by Minnesota Statutes, section 256J.26, subdivision 1? Select one.

- Written policy within the MFIP unit
- Coordination with Corrections
- Currently establishing new policy/procedure(s)
- Other – specify:

Submit a copy of your written policy as an attachment.

H. Administrative Cap Waiver

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) allows counties to request a waiver of the MFIP administrative cap (currently at 7.5%) for providing supported employment, uncompensated work, or a community work experience program for a major segment of the county's MFIP population. Counties that are operating such a program may request up to 15% administrative costs per MN Statute 256J.626, Subdivision 2.

If your County/Tribal Nation is interested in applying for the waiver for the coming biennium, please complete the following four questions.

1. Describe the activity(s) you will provide.

n/a

3997 characters remaining

2. Explain the reasons for the increased administrative cost.

4000 characters remaining

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

4000 characters remaining

4. Describe how the unpaid work experience is designed to impart skills and what steps are taken to help participants move from unpaid work to paid work.

4000 characters remaining

If your County/Tribal Nation is providing unpaid work experience activities for MFIP participants and you don't already have an Injury Protection Plan (IPP) in place, please click on this [\[LINK\]](#) to fill out the IPP form. Email the completed form to: Jonathan.Hausman@state.mn.us.

I. Provider Choice

MFIP provisions require counties to provide a choice of at least two employment service providers available to participants unless a workforce center is being utilized (MN Statute 256J.50, Subdivision 8). Counties may request an exception if meeting this requirement results in a financial hardship (MN Statute 256J.50, Subdivision 9).

Does your County/Tribal Nation:

- Have at least two employment and training services providers. Go to Section J.
- Have a CareerForce center that provides multiple employment and training services, offers multiple services options under a collaborative effort and can document that participants have choice among employment and training services designed to meet specialized needs. Go to Section J.
- Intend to submit a financial hardship request.

I. Provider Choice (continued)

Financial Hardship Request

A financial hardship is defined as a county's inability to provide the minimum level of service for all programs if a disproportionate amount of the MFIP consolidated fund must be used to cover the costs of purchasing employment services from two providers or the cost of contracting with a workforce center.

To request approval of a financial hardship exception from the choice of provider requirement, please provide the following information.

1. If the County/Tribal Nation had a choice of providers in calendar year 2023, describe:
 - factors that have changed which indicate a financial hardship,
 - why the hardship is expected to continue, and
 - the magnitude of the hardship, which makes limiting delivery of employment services the best financial option for the County/Tribal Nation.

2000 characters remaining

2. Summarize options explored by the county, including use of other partners in a workforce center or other community agencies, such as a Community Action Program or a technical college. The summary should also include:
 - major factors which prevent the County/Tribal Nation from utilizing these options and include a cost analysis of each option considered; and
 - the process used to determine the cost of other options (RFP or other County/Tribal Nation process).

2000 characters remaining

3. If the County/Tribal Nation proposes to directly deliver MFIP employment services, provide a budget and staffing plan that clearly indicates consolidated funds will not be used to supplant County/Tribal Nation funds. The description should include information about what steps will be taken to ensure that staff have the experience and skills to deliver employment services.

2000 characters remaining

Financial Hardship requests will be reviewed by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Employment and Economic (DEED) leadership. DHS and DEED will also look at the amount budgeted by the County/Tribal Nation for employment and training during calendar year 2023 and use this amount as a guide to determine whether the amount budgeted by the County/Tribal Nation for calendar year 2024 is reasonable.

If a financial hardship is approved, DHS and DEED will closely monitor County/Tribal Nation programs to ensure outcomes are achieved and services are being delivered consistent with state law. For additional information or if you have questions, please email Pamela McCauley at Pamela.McCauley@state.mn.us.

J. Budget

Click on the link below to review your service area's 2024 MFIP allocation and Federal Funding Sources:

[MFIP Consolidated Fund \(PDF\)](#)

In the budget table below, indicate the amount and percentage for each item listed for the budget line items for calendar years 2024-2025. Also note:

- Refer to the 2024-25 Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Biennial Service Agreement (BSA) Guidelines Bulletin section, "Allowable Services under MFIP Consolidated Fund."
- Total percent must equal 100.
- MFIP administration is capped at 7.5 percent unless the county is approved for an administrative cap waiver. To apply for the administrative cap waiver, respond to the questions in Section G under Administrative Cap Waiver.
- The percentage of Employment Services DWP budget should be significantly less than, the Employment Services MFIP budget.
- Income maintenance administration is reasonable in comparison to the whole budget.
- Ensure the Emergency Assistance/Crisis Services plan is included if funds are allocated.
- If "other" is used, briefly state or describe the line item. "Other" expenditures include any costs that are not related to administering MFIP, DWP or Emergency program services or atypical costs. All services must be an allowable service under the MFIP Consolidated Fund.
- Email Brandon Riley at brandon.riley@state.mn.us, if you need assistance or have questions with the budget section.

2024 Budget

Budgeted Amount	Percent	Line Items
<input type="text" value="3,000.00"/>	11.02%	Employment Services (DWP)
<input type="text" value="17,000.00"/>	62.46%	Employment Services (MFIP)
<input type="text" value="5,000.00"/>	18.37%	Emergency Services/Crisis Fund
<input type="text" value="2,041.00"/>	7.50%	Administration (cap at 7.5% or up to 15% with an approved administrative cap waiver)
<input type="text" value="176.00"/>	0.65%	Income Maintenance Administration
<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	0.00%	Incentives (Include the total amount of funds budgeted for participant incentives but don't include support services here)
<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	0.00%	Under 200% Services
<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	0.00%	Capital Expenditures
<input type="text"/>	0.00%	Other: <input type="text"/>
\$27,217.00	100.00%	Total

2025 Budget

Budgeted Amount	Percent	Line Items
<input type="text" value="3,000.00"/>	11.02%	Employment Services (DWP)
<input type="text" value="17,000.00"/>	62.46%	Employment Services (MFIP)
<input type="text" value="5,000.00"/>	18.37%	Emergency Services/Crisis Fund
<input type="text" value="2,041.00"/>	7.50%	Administration (cap at 7.5% or up to 15% with an approved administrative cap waiver)
<input type="text" value="176.00"/>	0.65%	Income Maintenance Administration
<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	0.00%	Incentives (Include the total amount of funds budgeted for participant incentives but don't include support services here)
<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	0.00%	Under 200% Services
<input type="text" value="0.00"/>	0.00%	Capital Expenditures
<input type="text"/>	0.00%	Other: <input type="text"/>
\$27,217.00	100.00%	Total

K. Certifications and Assurances

Public Input

*Prior to submission, did the County/Tribal Nation solicit public input for at least 30 days on the contents of the agreement?

- No
- Yes

Was public input received?

- No
- Yes

If received but not used, please explain.

K. Certifications and Assurances

Assurances

It is understood and agreed by the County/Tribal Nation board that funds granted pursuant to this service agreement will be expended for the purposes outlined in Minnesota Statutes, section 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, that documentation of compliance will be available for audit; that the County/Tribal Nation 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/Tribal Nation agrees to operate MFIP in accordance with state law and federal law and guidance from the department.

Counties and Tribal Nations may use the funds for any allowable expenditures under subdivision 2, including case management outlined in Minnesota Statutes, section 256J.

This allocation is funded with 8% state funds and 92% federal TANF funds and paid quarterly.

Federal funds. Payments are to be made from federal funds. If at any time such funds become unavailable, this CONTRACT shall be terminated immediately upon written notice of such fact by STATE to County/Tribal Nation. In the event of such termination, County/Tribal Nation shall be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for services satisfactorily performed. An amendment must be executed any time any of the data elements listed in 2 CFR 200.332 and this clause, including the Assistance Listing number, are changed, such as additional funds from the same federal award or additional funds from a different federal award. STATE has determined that County/Tribal Nation is a "contractor" and not a "subrecipient" pursuant to 2 C.F.R section 200.331.

Pass-through requirements. County/Tribal Nation acknowledges that, if it is a subrecipient of federal funds under this CONTRACT, County/Tribal Nation may be subject to certain compliance obligations. County/Tribal Nation can view a table of these obligations in the Health and Human Services Grants Policy Statement,[1] Exhibit 3 on page II-3, in addition to specific public policy requirements related to the federal funds here. To the degree federal funds are used in this contract, STATE and County/Tribal Nation agree to comply with all pass-through requirements, including each Party's auditing requirements as stated in 2 C.F.R. § 200.332 (Requirements for pass-through entities) and 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.501-521 (Subpart F – Audit Requirements).[2]

1. County/Tribal Nation:

Cook

(Must match the name associated with the Unique Entity Identifier.)

2. County/Tribal Nation Unique Entity Identifier (EUI):

16COO953

Effective April 4, 2022, the Unique Entity Identifier is the 12 character alphanumeric identifier established and assigned at SAM.gov to uniquely identify business entities and must match County/Tribal Nation name.

3. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN): 2201MNTANF and 2301MNTANF

4. Federal Award Date: October 1, 2022 (projected) (The date of the award to the MN Dept. of Human Services.)

5. Period of Performance: January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025

6. Budget period start and end date: January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025

7. *Amount of federal funds:

A. Total Amount Awarded to DHS for this project: \$103,290,000 (projected)

B. Total Amount Awarded by DHS for this project to County/Tribal Nation named above: \$ 27,217.00

8. Federal Award Project description: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

9. Name:

A. Federal Awarding Agency: Administration for Children and Families

B. MN Dept. of Human Services (DHS)

C. Contact information of DHS's awarding official: Jovon Perry, Jovon.perry@state.mn.us

10. *Assistance Listings Number & Name (formerly known as CFDA No.):

Payments are to be made from federal funds obtained by STATE through Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) No.:

NUMBER: 93 NAME: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Total amount made available at time of disbursement: \$ 27,217.00

11. *Is this federal award related to research and development? No Yes

12. Indirect Cost Rate for this federal award is: up to 15% (including if the de minimis rate is charged)

Service Agreement Certification

Checking this box certifies that this 2024 - 2025 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement has been prepared as required and approved by the County/Tribal Nation board(s) under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, section 256J. In the box below, state the name of the chair of the County/Tribal Nation board of commissioners or authorized designee, their mailing address and the name of the county.

*DATE OF CERTIFICATION

*NAME (CHAIR OR DESIGNEE)

*COUNTY/TRIBE

*MAILING ADDRESS

*CITY

*STATE

*ZIP CODE

If your county/tribal agency is unable to complete your BSA by October 15th, 2023, you will need to request an extension by emailing Jonathan.Hausman@state.mn.us. Please provide additional information about why you were not able to complete this form.

Save or Submit

To save your work, click the 'Save Form for Later' button. Your information will be saved, and you may finish the form later.

To submit your information to DHS, click the 'Submit Final Form' button.