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Article I. AN OVERVIEW

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) is an employment services program. It offers clients a variety of services in order to help the client obtain self-sufficiency. MFIP is Minnesota’s version of the Federal TANF Program.

All MFIP recipients receive an Orientation through Hennepin County Economic Assistance and select an Employment Services Provider (ESP) to work with to become self-sufficient.

Refer to the DHS MFIP Manual for policy and procedures. Hennepin County has provided the information contained in this manual for county policies and procedures.
Article II. ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Section 2.01 DIVERSIONARY WORK PROGRAM (DWP)

Refer to the DHS MFIP Manual for information on DWP.

(a) MFIP referrals at time of DWP termination:

Often, the case is still open on WF1 as DWP but the MFIP is not open on MAXIS for the current month. If this happens, assume that DWP has closed and MFIP was approved on MAXIS effective the next calendar month. The HSR Team does not make the referrals unless MFIP was opened on MAXIS. However, they are referred as soon as the MFIP case is approved, rather than waiting until the MFIP effective date, so that continued ES services can be provided as quickly as possible.

Section 2.02 LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLANS (LEP)

A client has limited English proficiency (LEP) if he/she is not able to speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that allows him/her to interact effectively with MFIP staff. This also includes clients who may know enough English to manage basic life skills, but may not speak, read or comprehend English well enough to understand in a meaningful way some of the more complicated concepts they may encounter within the DHS systems.

Hennepin County has an obligation to provide language assistance to applicants and clients with limited English language proficiency. We must be able to communicate effectively with a LEP client to ensure that they are given adequate information, and are able to understand the services and benefits available and what they are eligible to receive. The LEP client must also be able to communicate the relevant circumstances of his/her situation with the county. The LEP client must be offered competent interpreter services at no cost to them during all hours of an agency’s operation.

Identify the language preference for each client. Ask them if they would prefer the translated form (if available) as opposed to an English version of the form. It is the client who should decide if he/she needs translated forms. Bilingual staff who speak the client’s language is the best way to ensure effective oral communication with LEP clients.

Each agency will post the LEP Individual Bill of Rights poster. The waiver and the Bill of Rights are on the DHS website. Refer to DHS Manual for more information.

(a) Language Block
Attach the language block to correspondence sent to the client when the forms don’t already include the block.

Section 2.03 TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM

Enrolled Minnesota Chippewa Tribal members (Fond du Lac, Leech Lake, Bois Forte, White Earth, Mille Lacs or Grand Portage reservations) living in Hennepin/Ramsey/Anoka Counties have a choice between receiving MFIP/DWP financial assistance and employment services through the county or through the Tribal TANF program.

The Tribal TANF program is similar to MFIP but disregards a portion of Child Support and certain tribal payments. It also has a slightly higher earned income disregard. The sanction policy is different in that there is no disqualification.

Families applying for cash in Hennepin County are asked if they are an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe. If they are, they receive information about the Tribal TANF program and will decide whether to receive information about the program through mailings and other community outreach efforts.

Should an enrolled Chippewa family ask a Job Counselor about Tribal TANF, refer them to the Tribal office at 612-746-4800. If the family chooses to receive Tribal TANF, the Tribal office will contact the TTLs. The ES file will not be transferred until the TTLs contact the ESP.

Certain cases will not be transferred at this time are:

- Families who have used 60 or more counted TANF months
- 18/19 year old caregivers with no high school diploma or GED choosing the education option
- Minor caregivers

(a) **How to Transfer a case to Tribal TANF:**

Send this transfer to Janet Sharlow, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Urban Workforce Center, 1433 E. Franklin Avenue, Suite 25, Minneapolis, MN 55404.

Close the case on WF1 with the code “OM”. The effective date should be the date of transfer. Make a WF1 case note regarding the reason for closure and the fact that all materials were sent to the Tribal TANF office.
Article III. EMPLOYMENT PLANS

The details of what constitutes the initial assessment and reassessments, the EP and the minimum hourly requirements are addressed in the State’s MFIP ESP Policy Manual.

Effective 11/1/11 Hennepin County relaxed the policy of completing a new MFIP Employment Plan (EP) every 90 days (180 days for FSS). The NEW policy is to allow a REVIEW of the existing EP. Document the review in WF1 case notes. A new Employment Plan MUST be completed at least annually.

NOTE: the FVW EP review must be completed every 3 months with the person trained in domestic violence, the client and the job counselor. The results of the review should be provided to the TTL’s prior to the 10 day notice, especially for the extended cases so maxis is coded correctly.

If there are no changes to any sections of the existing EP and the client is compliant with it, the current EP can continue another 90 days.

Review of the EP consists of 5 steps:

1. Read over the EP on file on WF1...is it less than a year old?  
   (is the annual review date more than 90 days in the future?)  
   Determine if all is still appropriate and should continue another 90 days  
   (180 days for FSS)
2. Is the client compliant with the current plan and documentation up to date?.
3. Discuss the EP with the client, either on the phone or in person, and get their agreement to continue the EP (this includes FSS cases).
4. Document Review of the plan and the client’s agreement to continue it for 90/180 days  
   (and how agreement obtained) in the case note. The case note “subject” will be Employment/Service plan.
5. Tikl in WF1 for 90 (180) days to again review the EP.

IF there are ANY changes to the client’s situation or appropriateness of the existing employment plan or the client is not in compliance with the current plan, a new EP MUST BE COMPLETED (we are not allowing “revisions”). Changes include needing new verification of FSS criteria or further proof of need for a reduced hours plan. In general, reduced hours plans should not be "reviewed", as they are considered short term only pending FSS determination or getting back to a regular MFIP plan.

There MUST be a new EP completed on a case at least annually. (Be sure not to "change " the annual review date on any EP as this is your guide to when the next EP MUST BE on WF1, not just reviewed.)
(a) **Home Schooling as a Work Activity**

The State has determined that the activity of home schooling of children is NOT an allowable MFIP work activity.

(b) **Managed Care and CD/MH Assessment Services**

Many times the social and cultural stigma associated with the topics of chemical dependency and mental illness prevent clients from seeking and receiving help for their problems. Sometimes they don’t recognize that they have problems. If they do attend an assessment they may not reveal their problems or deny they have problems. They may even say that the Job Counselor (or other county department) told them they had to attend the assessment but they didn’t know why. It is difficult to get an accurate assessment without client cooperation or outside information to go on. There are steps the Job Counselor can take to get an accurate assessment. They are:

1. Speak with the client about the assessment and prepare them. Tell them why you are requesting it and what they may expect when they get there. The client should understand why they are being referred and be able to convey that information to the assessor.
2. Have the client sign a release form (A Medical Information Form) to allow you and the assessor to share information so you can verify the appointment was kept.
3. While the client is in your office call and set up the appointment. Note the provider’s name and phone number.
4. If you have collateral information that the assessor needs to do an accurate assessment, fax the release and a letter with the information to the provider. The collateral information may be based on your observations, client conversations, reasons why the client was fired from a job, the screening tool and scoring form, etc. The information is your rationale for requesting the assessment. By sending the information prior to the appointment it will help in the assessment, avoid confusion about the referral and cut down on wasted time with inaccurate assessments.

Call the HC Managed Health Care advocates at 612-596-7258 if there are questions or problems with the referral process.

(c) **Who Can Sign The Medical Information Forms**

DHS states the certification of an illness, injury, or incapacity should be from a qualified professional. Refer to the DHS Manual for the definition of a qualified professional.

**In the case of HCMC only**, the medical information may be completed by a staff person in the Social Services Department. The signature should include a statement to indicate the form was completed based on the doctor’s evaluation not their own. It may state “Per Dr. Smith’s evaluation on 5/5/01” or “completed under direction of Dr. Smith.”
Section 3.02  LOCAL POLICY FOR DHS EMPLOYABILITY MEASURE

(a) Overview Paperwork

NO ESP developed screening tools (as additional assessment aids) are to be used in lieu of the Employability Measure (EM) in Hennepin County. The Employability Measure must be completed on every client as per DHS instructions.

NOTE: The Self Screen form and the Brief Screening Tool for Special Learning Needs still need to be administered according to DHS policy.

(b) Programs where EM is not required

Participants who are in DWP or in the Teen Parent Program do not have to have the EM administered at that time. These staff members have the option to perform the EM at their discretion, and if this occurs, notes from the EM will be imaged into ECF. However, once the DWP or 18/19 year old participants are transferred into the regular MFIP program, they are expected to have the EM administered within 3 months of enrollment with your agency.

(c) Frequency of Employability Measure

During a participant’s time on MFIP, counselors are encouraged to administer an EM at any point when a client isn’t performing as expected and they would like to have more information in order to meet the client’s needs. Hennepin County requests the institution of the Employability Measure within the following time frames:

**Early months of MFIP/New Referrals/Existing Clients**
- New Enrollees: First EM should be administered within 3 months of enrollment.
- Transfers from DWP and Teen Parent program and Out of County transfers: EM should be administered within 3 months of transfer to your agency.

**60 Day Rule:**
If an EM was administered and a milestone comes up within 60 days, another should not need to be completed. A case note can be made that starts with “EM administered within 60 days of last EM completion”. This would be true for the July 31st deadline and any other time a client has an EM administered and then hits a milestone. So if you get a new referral and do an EM for a client in their 22nd month, you would not have to do one 2 months later for the 24 month milestone.

**Middle of MFIP**
Next EM should be completed at 24 months MFIP.
**Final months of MFIP**

Final EM should be completed at 48 months MFIP and coordinated with the 48 month checklist.

For documentation purposes, remember to case note if you are working on EM issues so it is clear to a monitor that your actions are a result of the findings from the EM. Local Hennepin County monitors will be checking the frequency of the EM when client files and WF1 are reviewed. If your agency chooses to administer the EM at more frequent intervals, please let your Hennepin County contract manager know.

**(d) HIPAA Reminder**

When entering reasons that link to case notes in Workforce One, remember to be HIPAA compliant. EMs and case notes will be visible to anyone in the agency with access to the assessment tab. HIPAA regulations are particularly strict with regard to issues of mental health and chemical dependency. If you are not familiar with them, it is important to review the HIPAA training.

Section 3.03 SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

If the medical information from the doctor indicates the client should apply for a disability, the Job Counselor should assist the client in the application process. Refer to the DHS manual for further information on resources and procedures for applying for SSA benefits.

**(a) Definition of Disability**

The person has a physical and/or mental impairment which
- prevents a person from doing substantial gainful work/activity, AND
- is expected to last at least one year or result in death.
Article IV. EMPLOYMENT

There are several types of employment. They include unsubsidized employment, supported work, on the job training (both public and private), paid work experiences work study, etc. The coding on WF1 is based on the type of employment.

When the client is on an OJT and using TANF funds to pay the wages, the MFIP case must remain open on WF1 even if the MAXIS case is closed for earned income.

Section 4.01 CLIENT FELONIES

Certain occupations will not hire someone with a felony record. In addition, clients with a felony record may be denied entry into certain training areas. If the client is already in the training program and it is determined they have a felony, the school may deny completion of the program. The client may be allowed to complete the course work, but not the internship experience necessary to graduate from the program.

Job Counselors must be aware of this and counsel the client accordingly.

(a) Minnesota Bonding Program

Fidelity Bonding is employee dishonesty insurance that protects employers against employee theft of any money or property. This insurance is a job placement tool because, in effect, it guarantees the job honesty of the applicant. It helps market the applicant’s strengths to the employer and can apply to any job.

The Minnesota Bonding Program (MBP) provides individual fidelity bonds to employers for job applicants who may be denied coverage by commercial carriers because of a:

- Record of arrest, conviction, or imprisonment
- History of alcohol or drug abuse
- Poor credit history
- Lack of employment history
- Dishonorable discharge

For more information call 651-296-8400.

(b) Record Expungement
MFIP clients may request assistance in getting their record expunged. The process is lengthy and often incomplete, but can provide pathways to employment for many people. The client should understand that there are limitations to which records a judge will seal, and which agencies are subject to the court’s order. The client should understand that even if the court seals all copies of the record held within government agencies, private data miners might still sell the expunged criminal data. This means that employers might obtain copies of the expunged criminal record. Because of this, the client might consider informing the employer of the expungement at the time of application, explaining to the employer that a judge determined that he or she has completely rehabilitated and is not a threat to public safety. Some employers will consider this in the hiring process; others have hiring policies that restrict the use of expunged records.

*Interview Tips for Former Offenders: from Minnesota Works.net 4/30/14 posting:*

If you’re like many job seekers, job interviews can get you nervous. You want to make your best impression and give the right answers to land a job. For people with less than perfect job histories or former offenders the prospect of a job interview can be more daunting. How should you answer questions about your spotty work record? How do you handle questions that hone in on your past criminal activity?

You can overcome these obstacles by practicing answers to difficult questions and paying attention to your body language.

Here we join our partner ISEEK in sharing these tips to improve your chance of landing a job:

**Never lie.** Don’t put false information on your resume or application either. Lying will disqualify you when the employer does a background check or checks your references.

**Answer questions directly.** Address any concerns an employer might have about your past. Then steer the interview back to your skills and the positive traits that you bring to the job. Don't give too much information or too many details about your past.

For example: “I can see why that gap in my work history might concern you. But that was several years ago and since then I have maintained a solid work record. I come to work on time. I am a very hard worker and quick learner."

**Address your criminal history midway, if possible.** Avoid talking about negative issues at the beginning or the end of an interview. Employers are more likely to remember their first and last impression. Give a summary of your qualifications at the end of the interview.

**Talk about your activities and plans.** Emphasize the education and job training, community service, and other activities you have participated in since your release. Talk about your career goals and how the job you are applying for fits them.
Assure the employer. If asked about your problems (such as convictions or incarceration) tell the employer that you have learned from your mistakes and have corrected them. Say that you will give 100 percent effort to the company and are willing to work late or come in early.

And send positive messages to employers even when you aren’t speaking. Employers hire workers who they trust and think will be enjoyable to work with.

That’s why you should also pay attention to your posture and eye contact during your practice. Some people might think that you are lying or hiding something if you don’t maintain eye contact with them. Send a signal to employers that you are interested in the job by standing and sitting tall and using facial expressions that show you’re engaged, friendly and likeable.

Need more help? If you need to address a criminal record, you can attend a free New Leaf workshop at a Minnesota WorkForce Center. This course gives you special job search strategies, including how, when and why to disclose your record, ways to address concerns from employers, methods for handling tough interview questions, and information on the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Federal Bonding Program and Ban the Box law.

Section 4.02 NON-DISPLACEMENT RULES

Work experience placements may be used as a means of helping the MFIP client develop skills and build a work history, as well as boost the county’s participation rate. The DHS manual has information intended to help explain the federal and state “non-displacement” requirements for paid and unpaid work experience placements.

Section 4.03 INJURY PROTECTION PROGRAM

Refer to the DHS manual for information and instructions to determine payment of any claims resulting from an alleged injury or death of a person participating in a county or a tribal unpaid work experience program. The DHS Injury Protection Program forms are posted on the ESP website.

Section 4.04 WORK FOR RENT

Refer to the DHS manual for information on self-employment.

Section 4.05 SUBSIDIZED/SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Subsidized wages are budgeted against the MFIP grant. This would include income from TreeTrust, or any other paid work experience. The income must be reported monthly on
an HRF. The Job Counselor will send in a status update to report the employment as well as inform the child care worker and HSR team of the Subsidized Income Code so that the MAXIS/JOBS panel can be coded correctly. There are 4 codes on the MAXIS/JOBS panel for subsidized income type. They are:

- 01 = Subsidized Public Sector Employer
- 02 = Subsidized Private Sector Employer
- 03 = On-the-Job-Training
- 04 = AmeriCorps (VISTA/state/National/NCCC)

When Supported Work cases are correctly entered in Maxis, the State is able to draw down a percentage of stimulus dollars. In Hennepin County, we have a lot of Supported Work activity, so correct coding can translate into dollars that are then re-invested into the funding for continued Supported Work activity. It is important that both ESPs and HSRs are correctly recording supported work.

Below are reminders for coding:

1. The activity on WF1 for Supported Work is "Paid Work Experience." Make sure to use this code for all Supported Work experiences.

2. The most common ESP error is when Supported Work is coded as "Part Time Employment." It would seem okay to code this but it doesn’t account for the subsidized nature of the wages. Be sure to understand this distinction.

3. When the Status Update is sent to the HSR reporting the employment, make sure to indicate on the SU that the job is subsidized and also list the appropriate code for Maxis coding from the drop-down in the employment section of the Status Update: See below:

The types listed on the drop down menu are:

- (01) Subsidized Public Sector Employer
- (02) Subsidized Private Sector Employer
- (03) On the Job Training
- (04) AmeriCorps (VISTA)/State/National/NCCC

4. Review ECF to make sure that there is an Employer Verification form on file. Many of the Supported Work providers fax the employer verifications directly to ECF.

5. When the job ends, check to see if the Stop Work verification is in ECF as well. This could be done when working on the Preliminary Reports while checking on work hours.

Note: Subsidized Employment does not need to follow the FLSA rules as would unpaid work experience.

SECTION 4.6 UNPAID WORK EXPERIENCE
Refer to the DHS manual for more information on this topic. Hennepin County developed a form to be used by employers and the ESP when placing someone into the unpaid work experience. The form is called Work Experience Activity Verification Form. This form and the State Injury Protection Program forms are available on the Hennepin County ESP website.

NOTE: FLSA rules need to be followed for unpaid work experience. Refer to the DHS Manual for more information.

NOTE: To calculate FLSA hours for Unpaid Work Experience use the cash benefit + food benefit + housing assistance grant. This information is located in Maxis and needs to verify it monthly. Then divide the total by the most current state minimum wage rate. This will give you the maximum allowable participation hours for the month. Use the minimum wage that is higher. The federal minimum wage is $7.25, the state is $9.86.

Section 4.06  HENNEPIN COUNTY GUIDELINES FOR UNPAID WORK EXPERIENCE

MFIP Employment Service providers should reference these guidelines when enrolling a recipient in an unpaid work experience.

(a) Community Service Program (Core Activities)
Community service placements must fulfill a useful public purpose. MFIP Employment Services Providers (ESPs) must identify and document this purpose in the case file. (Some examples include work performed for a school or Head Start Program, providing clerical support for a government or not-for-profit agency, working for a church preparing meals for the elderly, and /or participating in volunteer organizations.

(b) Unpaid Work Experience (Core Activities)
This activity is used when a participant is in a placement in a public, non-profit, or private sector work site. This can include unpaid work and unpaid internships. Unpaid work experience is an option if the participant agrees to participate and the unpaid work experience meets all the following criteria:

1. The participant has been unable to obtain or maintain paid employment in the competitive labor market and there are NO paid work experience programs available.
2. The unpaid work experience provides specific skills or experience that cannot be obtained through other work activity options where the participant lives or is willing to live.

3. The skills or experience gained may result in higher wages than the participant would earn without the unpaid work experience.

Avoid using the term “volunteer”. Based on review of worker’s compensation law, conversations with the Department of Labor, and case law, DHS strongly recommends that counties and employment services providers discontinue using the term “volunteer” with regard to the unpaid work program or participants in the program. For MFIP participants, employment is a mandatory program. There are no true “volunteers” so use of the term has resulted in confusion. (DHS Memo dated Dec 18, 2012)

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). When assigning the participant to an unpaid job, be sure not to exceed the maximum number of hours allowed by FLSA. (See ES Manual Section 9.3.)

Program Eligibility: Unpaid employment activities include unpaid work experience and community service which are core activities. These activities should be coded accordingly and the hours should be tracked on Workforce One (WF1). Document how the community service program work assignment enhances the participant’s employability. Employment Services counselors must have unpaid work appropriately documented and agreed to in the WF1 Employment Plan (DHS ES Manual Section 9.6). A signed participant employment plan and a Work Experience Activity form (completed by the Employer) both need to be in the participant’s case file. The unpaid work experience is limited to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.

(c) WORKPLACE INJURIES

Injury Protection Program (IPP) Coverage is available to cover the medical cost of work related injuries incurred by a participant while working in an unpaid work experience program provided that proper documentation has occurred in setting up the unpaid work experience. IPP is used to determine payment of any medical claims resulting from an alleged injury or death of a person participating in a county or tribal community work experience program. A claim is not valid if the county agency responsible for supervising the work activity cannot verify to the Commissioner the following:

- That appropriate supervision, safety training and information is provided to all persons being employed.
- That all work programs comply with federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration and state Department of Labor and Industry safety standards.
A claim that is not valid because of failure to verify safety training or compliance with safety standards will not be paid by the Department of Human Services or through the legislative claims process and must be heard, decided, and paid, if appropriate, by the local government unit or tribal program responsible for supervising the work of the claimant.

(d) Employment Service providers responsibilities in the event of a workplace injury

- Ensure that the Worksite Employer has provided immediate medical care to the participant and has informed the ES representative of the workplace injury within 24 hours.

- Investigate the nature and cause of the injury and immediately complete the DHS-3995-ENG Injury Protection Program (IPP) First Report of Injury form. Give the participant, worksite supervisor, and Angela Conley (Hennepin County contact) a copy of the First Report of Injury form within 24 hours of the incident. Do not wait for a medical report before filing the First Report of Injury form.

- Depending on the nature of the injury, notify the participant that you will be requesting a diagnosis of injury report from their medical provider and will need the medical provider contact information. The participant will also be required to sign a DHS-3994-ENG medical release of information form. Some workplace injuries may be minor and may not result in additional medical treatment. If the injury is minor and the participant states no additional treatment is required, document the conversation in the participant’s Workforce One case note file.

- If the workplace injury requires medical treatment complete DHS-3996 Injury Protection Program (IPP) Participant Medical Referral and Medical Care Provider Information Letter and send a copy of the DHS-3994 –ENG Injury Protection Program (IPP) Participant Information & Authorization to Release Medical Information form and the DHS-3997 Injury Protection Program (IPP) Participant Injury Status Report to the medical provider and IPP Contact.

- Maintain contact with the participant to ensure that the participant is progressing during their recovery.

- Upon receipt of the above completed forms, IPP Contact will send the forms to the DHS IPP Representative. DHS will review the claim forms, authorize or deny payment and work with the medical provider on payment related issues.

- Upon completion of all the required paperwork ES will work with the Worksite Employer to identify the cause of the accident and ways to prevent future
workplace injuries. ES must ensure that the worksite is safe and all safety procedures are in place before the participant returns to work or placing new participant at the worksite.

The following IPP forms are authorized by DHS:

**DHS 3979**- Notice of Privacy Practice form.
- Participants must receive a copy of this form prior to worksite placement.

**DHS- 3994-ENG** Injury Protection Program (IPP) Participant Information & Authorization to Release Medical Information
- Data privacy and medical release information for unpaid work experience participants in the case of worksite injury.

**DHS-3395-ENG** Injury Protection Program (IPP) First Report of Injury
- Report to be completed by a worksite staff member/supervisor when a participant in unpaid work experience sustains an injury.

**DHS-3996-ENG** Injury Protection Program (IPP) Participant Medical Referral and Medical Care Provider Information Letter
- Report to be completed by a worksite staff member/supervisor when a participant in unpaid work experience sustains an injury.

**DHS-3997-ENG** Injury Protection Program (IPP) Participant Injury Status Report:
- A report and diagnosis completed by medical provider of an injured participant in unpaid work experience

**DHS 3998-ENG** Injury Protection Program (IPP) IPP Claim Form
- To be completed by DHS IPP representative when finalizing the review of an injury protection claim for payment or denial.

DHS IPP forms can also be found at: http://mn.gov/dhs/search/?v:sources=mn-dhs-all&render.list-show=10&query=edoc

(e) *Non-Displacement Requirements*

**FEDERAL LAW**
Federal law places restrictions on the state’s use of federal funds to place MFIP recipients in jobs where they would be displacing a regular employee (42 U.S.C., § 607(f)). No adult in a work activity funded in whole or in part by federal funds should be employed or assigned when any other individual is on layoff from the same or any substantially equivalent job, or if the employer has terminated the employment of any regular employee or otherwise caused an involuntary reduction of its workforce in order to fill the vacancy with an MFIP recipient(s).

States must maintain a grievance procedure for resolving complaints of alleged violations.
STATE LAW
When union workplaces are involved, the requirements set out in Minn. Stat § 2563.72 must also be met.

- **Notification and Consent from Bargaining Representatives**

State law requires counties to provide written notification to and obtain the written concurrence of the appropriate exclusive bargaining representatives regarding job duties covered under the collective bargaining agreements, and ensure that no MFIP recipients will be placed in a work assignment that results in:

  - Termination, layoff, or reduction of the work hours of an employee for the purpose of hiring an MFIP recipient.
  - The hiring of an individual if any other person is on layoff, including seasonal layoff, from the same or a substantially equivalent job.
  - Any infringement of the promotional opportunities of any currently employed individual.
  - The impairment of existing contract for services of collective bargaining agreements.
  - A participant filling an established unfilled position vacancy, except for on-the-job training.

- **Limit on length of placement in temporary public service or community service jobs.**

Participants may not work in temporary public service or community service jobs for a public employer for more than 67 working days, or 536 hours, whichever is greater, as part of a work program under MFIP. A participant who exceeds the time limits is a public employee, as the term is used in Chapter 179A. Upon the written request of the exclusive bargaining representative, a county or public service employer must make available to the bargaining representative a report of hours worked by participants in temporary public service or community service jobs.

- **Dispute Resolution.**

If there is a dispute between an exclusive bargaining representative and a county or an employer over whether job duties are within the scope of a collective bargaining unit, the bargaining representative, the county, or the employer may petition the Bureau of Mediation Services to determine if the job duties are within the scope of a collective bargaining unit, and the Bureau shall render a binding decision.

If there is a dispute over whether there has been a violation of the non-displacement provisions, the parties may use a grievance and arbitration procedure in an existing collective bargaining agreement to process the dispute. If no grievance and arbitration procedure is in place, either party may submit the dispute to the Bureau. The
commissioner of the Bureau of Mediation Services shall establish a procedure for a neutral, binding resolution of the dispute.

Section 4.07 GUIDANCE
MFIP participants should NOT be placed in a position vacant as a result of lay off or earlier downsizing/termination, regardless of the amount of time that has elapsed. UNLESS the employer first offers the position to the employee who was laid off or downsized/terminated AND current employees for whom the position would be a promotion. If these individuals refuse the position, the participant may be placed. However, the collective bargaining unit must be notified and agree in writing to the placement. If the position is public or community service with a public employer, the participant would become a public employee if s/he works more than 67 days or 536 hours.

Section 4.08 DOCUMENTATION AND VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
From Appendix E of DHS ES Manual issued 2/2012

**Fair Labor Standards Act** (FLSA) – Most MFIP participants engaged in unpaid work experience or community service programs are covered under the FLSA and may not be required or permitted to work more than the number of hours equal to their combined MFIP cash and food assistance benefits divided by the federal minimum wage ($7.25/hr). Participants who are engaged in the maximum number of hours as allowed by the FLSA are deemed to be meeting the TANF work participation rate. Exceptions to this are participants working for AmeriCorp and AmeriCorp/VISTA.

**Family Stabilization Services** (FSS) The only difference for unpaid employment is that a time sheet or activity log must be submitted no less frequently than monthly and it can be completed by the participant, case manager or the job counselor with information provided by the participant or unpaid work supervisor. Ensure that any contact with the participant is case noted. Verification is only necessary if any activities on the time sheet or activity log are questionable.

Section 4.09 RENT IN RETURN FOR WORK
If families can produce either a check stub or statement from the landlord indicating that they have worked in exchange for rent reduction, the household can count the earnings as earned income. Hours of participation are calculated using the self-employment method. Hours will be taken from MAXIS. Code Workforce One (WF1) as either part-time or full-time employment. A business plan is not needed.
If the family makes a good faith effort to receive the rent reduction as cash or can produce evidence that they are working in exchange for rent and are unable to be paid in cash, the
earnings are considered “in-kind” income and are not counted against the grant. The job counselor can code this as unpaid work experience if it can be shown that participation in this activity is a meaningful activity that will provide marketable job skills and will assist the client in obtaining paid employment in the future.

Section 4.10 SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Policy:

Hennepin County employment service providers are responsible for determining the self-employment hours included in a participant’s employment plan. Each agency is expected to implement this policy as they see fit within established guidelines. We encourage you to be innovative yet consistent.

Participants will be in various stages of self-employment when they meet with you. Please use this document as guidance to help you determine the self-employment activity hours that will be included in the employment plan. Be sure to take into consideration the time it takes to connect with services, receive assistance, and conduct research to complete each section of the business plan. Encourage the participant to seek assistance from an agency or individual with small-business development expertise regardless of stage they are in their business.

Why are participants required to provide a complete business plan?

A business plan is necessary to allow the counselor to include self-employment activities in the employment plan and to approve support services for those activities.

Self-employment activity monitoring and approval:

Self-employment activities can be included in an employment plan only after the participant develops a business plan.

- The business plan must include a timetable, with earnings goals that will result in exiting MFIP.
- Participants with self-employment activities in their employment plan are required to meet WPR. Only the hours the participant is earning federal minimum wage count toward WPR.
- Participants who are already self-employed with business plans must be offered the opportunity to work with an organization that can help them revise their business to develop a plan that will result enough income to exit MFIP. If the participant does not want help, the counselor should work with the participant to look into other ways to move toward greater self-sufficiency.
- Progress in self-employment activities must be reviewed every three months.
• If there is no progress in self-employment activity, and no good cause is found for not making progress, deny the self-employment plan. Revise the employment plan to include other work activities.

**Documents to use to determine self-employment activities:**

**Business plan and SE activities approval form:**
- Make certain all sections of the business plan are answered clearly and completely.
- If there are missing or incomplete answers to the questions on the business plan, write down the date by which the information must be received.
- Compare potential earnings goals, and/or actual earnings to income amount needed to stop the 60 month clock and exit MFIP.
- Approve or deny self-employment activities.
- Determine total self-employment hours to be included in EP.

**Work will always pay**…**with MFIP** document is used to complete the Earnings goal/forecast section on the Business plan review and approval form.

**Self-employment 3 month review form** is used to:
- Compare actual income to potential income 3 months after the business plan approval month.
- Determine if self-employment is moving the family toward self-sufficiency and exiting MFIP.
- Determine if self-employment activity will continue to be included in the employment plan.

**Small Business Resource list** is used to give participant resources to help them with business development or ongoing business needs.

**Adding self-employment activities into the employment plan (EP):**

When adding self-employment activities into the EP, be sure the next steps are written clearly and completely. Each participant in the business plan development stage may need different amounts of time to answer each question. To avoid confusion, a single review date should be given to determine completeness and next steps.

The table below lists basic counselor and participant responsibilities for self-employment activities. There may be additional responsibilities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Counselor responsibilities</th>
<th>Participant responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explain:</strong></td>
<td>▪ Select an individual/organization to assist in developing a business plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ The requirement to develop, and comply with the activities in the employment plan by the agreed upon dates and the consequences for non-compliance.</td>
<td>▪ Provide a complete business plan to counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Self-employment activities can be included in an employment plan only after the participant develops a business plan</td>
<td>DHS-6200 form can be used for the following businesses:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The counselor must also:</strong></td>
<td>▪ In-home product sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Support, encourage, and discuss the reality of self-employment while on a time-limited program.</td>
<td>○ (Avon, jewelry, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Discuss business plan development options.</td>
<td>○ Personal services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Offer resources available for business plan development.</td>
<td>○ (hairdresser, massage, nail care etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Be prepared to deny the business plan and require the participant to seek traditional employment.</td>
<td>○ Day care in the home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Handyman services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Accounting services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Paper route</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Housecleaning service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Taxi driver (Lyft, Uber etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Miscellaneous services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another business plan format may be used, but it must include all questions from the DHS-6200 form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Meet all requirements in employment plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When a complete business plan is received the counselor will:

- Include self-employment activities in the employment plan.
- Review the employment plan every 3 months to determine if earnings are moving the family toward exiting MFIP.
- Determine if self-employment activities will remain in employment plan depending on progress toward exiting MFIP.
- Coordinate application for child care assistance.
  - Provide CCA total hours needed to comply with activities in EP.
  - Take into consideration child/children’s school schedule and activities for both parents prior to determining total hours needed.

If self-employment activities are approved, the participant will:

- Meet requirements in employment plan.
- Participate in other activities if self-employment activities do not meet WPR required hours.

Refer to the DHS manual for further information on self-employment.

Section 4.11 WORKING AS A SELF-EMPLOYED CHILD CARE PROVIDER

Licensed or legal non-licensed child care providers are not eligible for child care assistance for their own children or children in their custody.

Employment Plans should NOT be approved for a client requesting child care for her own children so that she may care for some other children – either in her own home or the other children’s home. The situation would be somewhat different if the client was working as a paid employee in a child care center. This could be a starting point in a career with pay increases and paid benefits.

Child care is available for activities not associated with this self-employment activity. For example, the client provides child care 5 days a week. On the weekends she works at Target. She can receive child care for the time she is working at Target.
Section 4.12  FOSTER CARE

According to the State, the providing of foster care is NOT a countable work activity, and required training doesn’t fit into vocational education or job skills directly related to employment. Child care support services are not available for foster children.

Section 4.13  HOW PAY STUBS GET ENTERED INTO MAXIS

Work hours are based on PAY DATES, not on the pay period dates. This means that if a pay period is (for example), 3/15 through 3/31, and the client is paid on 4/5, the hours will be counted for April, not March.

The State counts the hours when the client quits a job when they are paid in the next month, even though they didn’t work in that month.

(a)  Participation Rates and Work Hours

A client working 32 hours per week does NOT meet the federal participation rate. A client must work 33 hours a week or more to get the 130 hours per month necessary to meet the participation rate. The federal calculation is 4.33 weeks in a month and 30 x 4=129.9 which is rounded to 130.

Section 4.14  PAY STUBS IN ECF

The client must provide work verification to the HSR every month. It is not necessary for the ESP to ask the client for pay stubs if this information is available in ECF. Each month the Job Counselor should look at the pay stubs in ECF. Case note in WF1 that the pay stubs were checked and the results to verify:

1. Hours worked for the purposes of the child care authorization.
2. Hours worked for preliminary participation rate report (in case the HSR team didn’t record all the hours and the Job Counselor wants to get it corrected.)
3. Hours worked for a client extended based on employment to make sure s/he’s continuing to work enough hours.
4. Hours worked so the EP can be adjusted if necessary.

Section 4.15  EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Background: the following is a 9/2013 policy interpretation #13590 from DHS Policy Quest in reference to employers – mainly temp agencies – charging a fee ($30) to complete the Employment Verification Form. We wanted to know if TANF funds could be used to pay this fee. Policy Quest outlined the following
information below. Their conclusion was: **For ES, in this situation it is reasonable to consider the verification unavailable since the employer is charging $30.**

Documentation and verification of paid employment hours is required for all paid work activities including:

- unsubsidized employment
- subsidized private sector employment
- Subsidized public sector employment and
- On-the-job training

Acceptable documentation includes:

- Employer reports
- Wage stubs; or
- Other employer issued documentation

In addition, documentation via a phone call with the employer is acceptable only when the above forms of documentation are not available. Such as, it is reasonable to consider the verification unavailable if the employer is charging a monetary fee to complete an Employment Verification Form. Obtain a release from the client prior to contacting the employer. When verification of the hours worked is received through a phone call with the employer, document in the case/note the call and information obtained – including the name/phone number of the person verifying the hours.

Self-declared hours for any work activity, including the four types of paid employment listed above, is not acceptable documentation.

Hennepin County Child Care Assistance added:

Child Care Assistance needs to verify income and schedule to authorize assistance. We can use pay stubs and the client can submit their schedule. We don’t necessarily need the Employment Verification Form completed if it is unavailable. The employment verification form is preferred as it is easier with new employment - it shows start date, income, and schedule in one spot. A verbal confirmation of income and schedule followed up with pay stubs after the first month would be allowed if the other methods were unavailable.
Article V. EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Section 5.01 HENNEPIN COUNTY MFIP CLIENT ESP/WF1 REFERRAL PROCESS

Listed below is the referral flow for a client when they come in to apply for MFIP.

1. Client completes the CAF and requests cash assistance (MFIP)
2. Eligibility approved
3. HSR receives a MAXIS pop-up prompt indicating client needs to be referred for Employment Services via a WF1 referral
4. In MAXIS the HSR will generate an MFIP WF1 referral to the MFIP Coordination Office (WPR considers this client in the HC denominator on this date-including retro approvals of MFIP) – DHS decided in 2013 to allow a total of seven days from the date the referral is generated until the date of enrollment at the ESP. This is counted as day one. The referral is now in MFIP Coordination Office WF1 queue
5. Hennepin County requires the WF1 referral to be referred to the ESP within the three days of the referral arriving in the MFIP Coordination Office. The TTL reviews:
   a. the case to determine if there was a previous ESP for client. Is the Client in sanction/disqualification?
   b. the client completed an ESP choice sheet
   c. the ESP open/closed for referral list to determine if the ESP is open for new referrals
   d. the client’s address
   e. the FSS criteria
6. Based on the review, the TTL will assign the case to an ESP. The WF1 referral is transferred into the ESP agency referral queue. The TTL will code Maxis panels.

The WF1 referral is now in the ESP Agency Referral Queue. The ESP four days to accept and enroll the case. The ESP will follow the process outlined in the next section.

Section 5.02 HENNEPIN COUNTY WF1 REFERRALS TO ESP AGENCY QUEUES:
DHS Manual states: All MFIP referrals must be accepted or declined in WF1, no later than seven calendar days after receipt of the referral, and the participant must be placed in either an enrolled or eligible, not enrolled status.

In Hennepin County it was decided the MFIP Coordination Office had 3 days to refer the WF1 case to an ESP and the ESP had 4 calendar days to accept or decline the WF1 referral. DHS made this change in 4/2013.

(a) 

Hennepin Co Accepting WF1 Referrals Process effective 3/21/11

1) An ESP must “accept”, “APP” and “enroll” all referrals within 4 days of receipt (effective 2013, Hennepin County requires 4 days from receipt rather than 5). The referral receipt date is the date WF1 auto enters into the “comments” of the referral. (Exception examples are unavailable referrals due to DWP not yet closed, other county agency or programs not yet closed.)

2) Open the activity of local flag.

3) On the day Overview is held, the activity MUST BE CHANGED from Local Flag to another activity (assessment). At this time, if the first EP is developed, other activities would also be opened. DHS recommends that Assessment be left open for the duration of a case. The case record MUST CONTAIN documentation of ALL time recorded/tracked in that activity.

Please note: NO HOURS can be tracked prior to Overview and only CLIENT time can be recorded as Assessment (any time the JC spends on the case is NOT reportable time).

No hours should be entered into WF1 prior to a client attending an overview. When the participant attends an overview, the activity must be changed from Local Flag to ASSESSMENT. Close the Local Flag activity. The hours spent at the overview can be entered into WF1 and case noted. No other activities should be opened until the participant has developed an employment plan. Once the plan has been developed and signed, activities should be opened based on the activities that are included in the employment plan.

Participants are then required to report the time they were engaged in the agreed upon activities. These hours should be entered in WF1 provided they meet the DRA documentation and verification standards.

An exception to this is when participants were engaged in a documented and verified allowable activity (the participant must have the documentation with them at the time the EP is written) between the date of referral to the agency and when they attend an overview; this is not a common situation but it does happen on occasion. In these situations the employment plan can be back dated to include that activity; open the corresponding activity in WF1 and track accordingly. This is still based on a signed
employment plan.

For example, a participant is required to do Sentence to Serve (community service) full time and is unable to attend an overview until that is completed. The employment plan could be back dated to the date the activity began but it cannot precede the date the WF1 record was opened (the enrollment date). The corresponding activity should be opened on WF1 (effective the same date as the EP) and the hours they engaged in that activity (which must be documented and verified) should be entered into WF1.

Section 5.03  CHILD ONLY CASES AND CAREGIVERS NOT ON MFIP:

Since DRA began there is no longer a category of “Volunteer” for MFIP Employment Services. This means in the case where only the children are receiving MFIP, the caregiver (such as grandmother) is not required to participate in ESP activities. She is not on the grant (a child only case). Neither is she eligible to “volunteer” for ESP services. And, she will not be eligible for MFIP client support services.

There are instances when the caregiver changes back and forth from being on the MFIP grant and electing to go off the MFIP grant. The ESP must watch the status updates and communication between maxis and WF1. The WF1 case must be closed when the caregiver is removed from the MFIP grant and all client support services terminated. A new WF1 referral will be generated when the caregiver is added back to the case.

The ONLY exception to this is when the caregiver/parent is disqualified from receiving MFIP cash due to FRAUD disqualification. This person is required to participate in MFIP ESP activities. Failure to do so will result in sanctions against the MFIP grant.

Section 5.04  OVERVIEW

Clients who have terminated from MFIP and later come back on assistance do not need to attend a full overview if they come back on MFIP within 90 days from the termination and are referred back to the same agency. In this case, the agency can review the Family Violence Waiver and the 60 month time limits with the client. If MFIP or agency policies and procedures have changed since the client terminated MFIP then the client should attend another full overview. Keep in mind that the overview can be a one-on-one interview.

If the client is referred to a different agency then a full overview is required.

Section 5.05  DWP TRANSITION TO MFIP
DHS sends the client a termination notice when DWP ends. The notice informs them to call the County if they want to apply for MFIP.

The client will complete an MTAF (program change request form) before MFIP eligibility is determined. If an MTAF isn’t completed within 30 days of DWP termination, a full CAF must be taken. Clients going to MFIP must attend MFIP orientation within 30 days of MFIP approval (there are a few exemptions).

If the client is approved for MFIP, they will select an ESP and the WF1 referral will be sent to the ESP.

Section 5.06 SERVING ALL CLIENTS REFERRED

We have many contracted MFIP vendors. Some of the contracted vendors have a mission to provide specialized services to a particular ethnic group. Some other agencies have employees who are familiar with the culture/language of particular ethnic groups. When clients are asked to choose the agency from which they would like to receive services, they are encouraged to select one that is listed on the choice sheet as providing services in their language. They do not always do this.

The law provides that clients must be allowed to choose the agency they want. Sometimes they make that choice based on how close it is to their home or whether it is on a convenient bus line. They may prefer the same agency as their friend has or specifically avoid a certain agency. It can’t be assumed that the client choice was uninformed just because the reason for the choice isn’t obvious.

A Southeast Asian client may decide to choose LSS, JFCS or AIOIC instead of an agency that has a mission to serve Southeast Asian clients. The agency the client selects is expected to provide the same services to this client as any other client. (This was clear in the instructions to agencies applying to the county for a contract to provide MFIP services.)

This means your agency may need to find, and pay for, an interpreter for the client. The DHS bulletin #01-89-01 states: “The general rule for providing interpreter services is that each county agency must provide competent interpreter services free of charge, in a timely manner, during all hours of an agency’s operation.” The cost of the interpreter would come directly out of your direct program costs.

In most cases the client would receive better services if the job counselor spoke the same language as the client. The job counselor understands the MFIP program and could better explain it than an interpreter.
However, a case transfer CANNOT be the automatic response in these situations. The agency must follow the transfer procedures.

The agency must always ask the client if he/she wants a translated form (if available) as opposed to an English version of the form. It is the client who should decide if he/she needs translated forms.

Section 5.07 CLIENT CONTACT

Follow the suggested guidelines for minimum contact listed in the State MFIP Manual. Further client contact will vary depending on the situation and what is written in the EP.

Section 5.08 CHILD UNDER 1 EXEMPTION

The policy is for the HSR to generate a WF1 referral to MFIP Coordination Office WF1 Agency Queue when a client is approved for MFIP and takes the child under 1 exemption. When the WF1 referral is assigned to the ESP it will state the client is on the exemption and the date when it will end. The ESP will code the WF1 case as “holding” for the child under 1 exemption. The ESP will track the case but is not expected to work with the client and/or provide client support services. When the exemption ends and/or the client requests the exemption to end, the change will show up on WF1 as a status update change to “20” Universal Participation. At that point the ESP will begin working with the client.

Until maxis shows the exemption is removed, the exemption remains in effect. If the client was coded as exempt for the beginning of the month the client is counted as exempt for the entire month. Any request to end the exemption would not take place until the first of the next month.

If there are problems with getting the exemption applied or removed contact the HSR Team and/or their supervisor.

NOTE: the child under 1 exemption is NOT available to the teen parent.

Section 5.09 ENROLLING CLIENTS UNDER AGE 20

MFIP caregivers under age 20 who have completed their high school diploma or GED are subject to the same rules as other mandatory caregivers.

MFIP caregivers 18-19 years old without a high school diploma or GED are required to choose an EP with either an education option or an employment option. The teen parent
will normally be given this option at the time they meet with the MVNA counselor. The 60 month clock does not run while in the education option.

IF the client chose the employment option they will be referred to an MFIP agency. An EP with the employment option will include activities under the regular employment services track. The 60 month time clock will NOT stop if they choose the work option.

NOTE: the child under one exemption does not apply to the education option.

(a) **Switching From/To Education or Employment option:**

Switch from education to employment: Clients who are 18 or 19 years old may switch from an education option to an employment option unless a sanction has been imposed or the NOITS sent. If a sanction has been imposed or the NOITS sent, the client must clear the sanction at MVNA before the client is transferred. (If a client has turned age 20 while in sanction must attend the new ESP Overview to clear the sanction.

Switch from employment to education: Clients who are 18 or 19 years old may switch from an employment option to an education option unless a sanction is imposed or the NOITS sent. If a sanction is imposed or the NOITS sent, the client must enroll in and start attending school before the sanction process is stopped and the sanction lifted. Allowances may be made during the summer months if school attendance is not an option. In that case registration would suffice.

(b) **For clients under 18**

Clients under the age of 18 without a GED or high school diploma are not to be enrolled with a regular MFIP ESP. The services for this client group must be provided by MVNA TEEN HOPE. The client under age 18, who does have a GED or high school diploma, must be enrolled into MFIP Employment Services.

(c) **For clients under age 20**

Clients under age 20 without a GED or high school diploma and taking the education option are not enrolled with a regular MFIP ESP. They are assigned to the MVNA-TEEN HOPE.

When the client reaches age 20 years, they will be transferred to a regular MFIP ESP. There are exceptions to this. Effective 7/2017, MVNA will retain students until the end of their 21st year in the following instances:

- If a 20 year old is likely to complete diploma/GED by the end of their 21st year, they will be retained by MVNA until they reach the 11th month of their 21st year.
This means a student would stay with MVNA through their 21st year as long as they turned 21 after the start of the current school year.

- If a 20 year old has an IEP or a documented disability (FSS) - they will be retained by MVNA until they reach the 11th month of their 21st year.

This change will prevent students from “falling through the cracks”, creating disruption with their educational progress and discontinuity of their child care assistance.

For situations when the MFIP case is terminated for over OR under 30 days, if the client is 20 years old without a GED or high school diploma AND the last ESP of record is MVNA program, THEN they can be referred to the MVNA program again. If they are assigned to a regular ESP, they remain with the regular ESP.

(d) **Monitor School Attendance**

All MFIP caretakers under the age of 20 must provide their MFIP ESP with written proof of school attendance on a monthly basis. The ESP must inform the HSR TEAM when the client has completed high school or received a GED in order to correctly code MAXIS.

(e) **How Minor Caretaker’s Participation Rates are Counted**

The lone eligible caregiver or married caregiver: if the school attendance deems them engaged then they are in the numerator.

If two eligible teen caregivers are living together, then the total hours for the case to be in the numerator are 87 core and 43 either core or non-core hours to reach the total of 130 hours. They are counted in the TANF rate, but not in the MFIP rate. This is the same as any two parent case, and the age of the youngest child doesn’t matter.

School attendance is counted for the WPR in the birthday month. There may be instances when the new ESP may decide to include school activities in the EP for a period of time. If asked by the new ESP, MVNA will provide school attendance documentation for the transferred participant for the new ESP to track hours for the participation rate. The teen parent is considered under age 20 until the first of the month after their birthday at the time when the Maxis system is updated.

(f) **WF1 referrals for teen parents near their 20th birthday**

Based on the day the TTL is ASSIGNING the referral from the MFIP Coordination Office queue:

From the 1st through the 10th, the referral is assigned to MVNA
From the 11th thru the end of the month the referral is assigned to a regular ESP
(g) **Active Cases**
Participants who are turning age 20 will be transferred from MVNA to a regular ESP in the month the participant turns 20. The exception is if the participant has an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The participant will remain with the MVNA until age 21.

(h) **Teen Parent Transition to Regular ESP/Inter-Agency Transfer**

MVNA will use the current/open WF1 case sequence to transfer the WF1 case to a regular ESP. The case must not be exited and no new WF1 referral will be generated.

MVNA is EXCLUDED from the “open / closed” for assignment criteria. MVNA will assign cases to the most appropriate agency for the participant.

Section 5.10 **100% SANCTION RESOLUTION FOR RECIPIENTS UNDER AGE 20**

Whenever a WF1 referral is assigned to CLEAR A 100% SANCTION information MUST BE NOTED IN THE WF1 COMMENTS section of the referral, by the MFIP Coordination Office. (Example of Referral Comment: Participant case closed for Sanction. MFIP application 7/4/2012, needs to clear sanction to reopen.) These referrals should be given priority and expedited as compliance must be completed within 30 days.

If an applicant is in 100% sanction and was sanctioned by MVNA they are assigned back to MVNA to comply UNLESS they are PAST the MONTH they turned 20. At that point, the participant must be assigned to a regular ESP to clear the sanction.

If the participant is turning 20 in the same month as the WF1 referral is assigned the following applies: A WF1 referral will be sent back to the MVNA until the 19th of the month. On the 20th of the month the WF1 referral will be sent to a regular ESP to have the sanction lifted.

If the participant is placed in sanction by MVNA for not attending Overview and is turning age 20, the case will be transferred to a regular ESP with the Overview sanction in place. The new ESP will lift the sanction when the participant attends the Overview at the new ESP.

If the participant was sanctioned by a regular ESP the participant will return to that agency.
The ESP will follow the City/County ESP manual process for Sanctioned Cases and inform the HSR immediately when the participant comes into compliance or, if the participant has not complied within 30 days exit the referral and close WF1.

Section 5.11 COMMUNICATING INFORMATION BETWEEN THE ESP AND HENNEPIN COUNTY

Hennepin County staff and ES Providers must work together to provide services to DWP/MFIP participants. Participants should not be required to provide the same information to multiple areas. Information “known to the agency” must be communicated back and forth in a timely manner in order for the service delivery system to work. The communication methods used in Hennepin County include: phone, email, WF1, the Status Update, ECF (to be replaced with the Enterprise Communications Framework (ECF—formerly Electronic Case File).

ECF (or ECF): mail/fax all medical documentation used to determine FSS eligibility, medical documentation of (current) FSS continued eligibility, and the medical documentation when FSS eligibility ends, SSI/RSDI correspondence, start/stop work documentation, paystubs, Status Updates, documents needed for extensions, etc. Clients may ask for their Household Report Form to be mailed/faxed into ECF.
ECF fax # 612-288-2981.
Child Care ECF fax # 612-288-2982.
To obtain envelopes (addressed & stamped) to mail documents to ECF: 612-348-7049, 348-9307, 348-6974.

NOTE: ECF and ECF are part of the HSR case file. ESP staff are granted access to view some of the information contained in this ECF case file. However, the ESP staff access does not infer ESP claims as being a part of the ESP case file. The ESP will not provide the client, Legal Aid or anyone else direct access to this system. Direct requests for any information contained in the system to the HSR team.

STATUS UPDATE: The MFIP Status Update Form is the standard method used to communicate back and forth between the MFIP agency and several Hennepin County offices including the HSRs and the Child Care workers. Use the form for information such as: initiate and cure a sanction, start/stop work, changes in the household (new address, someone moved in or out of home), DWP/MFIP case opened or terminated, etc.

EMAIL: To email the HSR Team use: hsph.es.team###@hennepin.us. In the ### part of the email address listed insert the TEAM number, such as 450, 461, etc. The TTL email is hsph.es.team.ttl@hennepin.us.
Section 5.12  NOTICE OF INTENT TO SANCTION (NOITS)

This is a DHS form (DHS-3175). The NOITS is used for both pre and post-60 months cases. Whenever a NOITS is sent a copy of the good cause sheet and the special circumstances sheet must go out with it. Retain a paper copy of the NOITS in the case file for forms completed on WF1 and the ones completed by hand.

The NOITS must give the client at a minimum a 10 day notice to comply and it must spell out exactly what is required for the client to come into compliance. The NOITS should list specific activities/tasks to complete in order to lift the sanction and the date to comply with the activities. Although the participant must be allowed at least 10 days to comply, a longer time frame may be allowed for compliance when the action necessary to comply will take time to complete. When the 10-day verification period falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, extend the time period to accept the verification on the next working day.

The client should not be sanctioned if their current level of participation meets the participation rate. For example: A MFIP client (with a child under 6) has an EP activity to job search 108 hours/month. Last month they only have a total of 95 hours of job search. Since the client met the minimum hourly requirements for the month and will not be sanctioned.

Section 5.13  SANCTIONS

A failure to comply with the conditions of the EP will result in a sanction for the client unless they have good cause. The Job Counselor and the HSR must first determine if the client meets one of the good cause criteria. Follow the sanction cut off date schedules.

Refer to the DHS manual for further instructions and procedures required in the sanction process including minimum contact requirements, face to face contacts and sanction resolution for disqualified sanction clients.

(a)  Sanction Process and Cut-Off Dates

For sanction purposes there are two 10 day cut off deadlines. The first, related to imposing sanctions varies each month and is determined by the Department of Human Services (DHS). This is the last day that the HSRs can impose a sanction on the MAXIS system to reduce the grant for the first of the upcoming month. It is referred to as “10 day cut-off.

Per HSPH 1/19/2012 Quality Improvement Team tip: Before taking most negative actions, the HSR must notify the client of the action and allow time for a response. The
time the HSR must allow varies according to the program, the proposed action and its cause. The HSR’s are instructed to count the day they mail a notice as the 1st day of the notice period and to count the day before the effective date of the action as the last day of the notice period. For MFIP/DWP.

Example on 1/19/12 from HC Quality Improvement Team memo: The HSR requested verifications on 1/9/12 (or before). On 1/19/12 (10 day cutoff) the HSR will send the client a notice of adverse action to close the case effective 2/1/12 for lack of the verifications.

(NOTE: In the case of an ESP sanction, the ESP would have requested the verifications and given the client at a minimum 10 days to provide them. The HSR adverse action for 2/1/12 would be to impose the ESP sanction based on the ESP Status Update.)

Mail/Fax the status updates to impose a sanction to (612) 288-2981. This is where they will be imaged to the case file for the HSR. This process is usually completed within 24 hours. Keep in mind that the sooner the status update is sent to impose a sanction, the more likely it will be imposed for the 1st of the upcoming month. Imaging normally backs up close to the cut off day, so, it is recommended NOT to wait until the day before cut off to fax/mail in S/U to sanction. There should be no assumption that any sanction request sent on or near cut off will be imposed for the following month. To view the date the S/U was “viewable” to the HSR, click on “properties” in the imaged document. If you cannot see the form in ECF, neither can the HSR.

The TTLs will send an e-mail toward the end of each month to let the ESP know what the cutoff date is for the upcoming month.

The second cut-off date relates to sanction cures. This is the last day that a client can comply with the Employment Service Provider requirements to ensure that the sanction is removed the first of the upcoming month. The sanction can be cured on or before 10 days prior to the EFFECTIVE date of the sanction. Refer to the DHS manual.

NOTE: These two dates often DO NOT fall on the same day. This has led to some confusion. Keep the calendar handy to avoid confusion and circle the 10 day cut-off impose date when it is made known to the agency. This will keep both dates noted in one place.

(b) Sanction Process for Teen Parents

Hennepin County will waive the February 5, 2013 WF1 Policy Initiative #2 requirement for MFIP Teen Parents served by MVNA. The reason for exclusion is that in the late 1990’s, Hennepin County designed and implemented an electronic system to track attendance, mail a NOITS, and send a status date to the HSR team. The NOITS generated by this system has been approved by DHS. It makes no sense to create a parallel system
using the NOITS on WF1, so the original electronic system will be approved for sanctioning purposes. Additionally, there has been good communication regarding sanction with Team 465 and the sanctioning timeframes have not been an issue.

(c) **Sanctioned Client Moves into HC**

MFIP sanctioned clients who move into Hennepin County can cure the sanction by attending an Employment Service Overview in Hennepin County. The client will be referred to an Employment Service Provider WF1 referral which will contain a note on the sanctioned status. Schedule the sanctioned client in for an Overview as soon as possible. Inform the HSR to lift the sanction after the client attends the Overview.

(d) **Emergency Assistance and Sanctions**

With the consolidated fund, counties created their own rules for qualifying for EA. In Hennepin County, if someone on MFIP applies for EA, they must cooperate and cure any ESP sanction in order to be eligible for the emergency assistance. If someone is NOT on MFIP and they apply for EA without applying for MFIP, it is not necessary for them to cure the MFIP sanction or sanction disqualification to receive EA. If the EA team determines the client does not have enough income and would need the cash portion of MFIP to make ends meet, then at that point the client would need to apply for MFIP and cure the sanction.

(e) **Sanctions and the Work Participation Rate:**

The single custodial parent’s/Work Eligible Individual's case is disregarded from the TANF work participation rate if the WEI is not successfully participating and the case meets one of these criteria:

• MFIP cases in the first 3 months of sanction in a 12 month period

• MFIP or WB cases with a child under the age of one and not disregarded for this reason for more than 12 months since 10/1/02

In both of these situations, if the client DOES meet the WPR, they will be included in the agency rate.

Section 5.14 **HC PROCESS FOR CLIENTS IN 7TH MONTH OF SANCTION:**

MFIP cases that have CLOSED for 7 month sanctions are to be handled in this way:
If the client contacts the ESP to comply, the ESP will refer them to the HSR Team. The client needs to be reapplying for MFIP to be considered for “curing” their sanction.

WHEN THE CLIENT CONTACTS THE HSR TEAM TO REAPPLY FOR MFIP THE APPLICATION WILL BE PENDED ON MAXIS.

The HSR Team will generate a manual WF1 referral on maxis when the case is pended. In most cases, MAXIS will produce a DAIL message to have the case referred. If not, a manual WF1 referral will be generated.

NOTE: THIS IS THE ONLY INSTANCE WHERE DHS SAYS A MANUAL WF1 REFERRAL MUST BE DONE.

- The WF1 referral will be transferred to the most recently assigned ESP. That ESP will work with the client to cure the sanction. NOTE: these clients are not subject to the same process as regular referrals, NOITS should not be sent or additional sanction action started. The client either complies and cures the sanction or does not comply and cure the existing sanction.
- WF1 is open for the ESP to work on the system to develop an EP and record activities. If the client hasn’t complied within 30 days of the referral date, the HSR will deny MFIP and the ESP will close their WF1 case. Another application will trigger another referral. Do not wait 30 days to close the WF1 case if the client doesn’t comply. It is okay to close it immediately.
- When the sanction is cured, the ESP will send a status update to the HSR team to let them know the client has complied and the MFIP can be reopened. In this instance, a new referral will NOT be generated when MFIP is approved because MAXIS reads the active referral and WF1 already has an active case based on the “cure” referral. There is an active referral and active WF1 case already out there from the manual referral.
- **If the ESP has not received a Status Update on the case stating MFIP is inactive (from Pending) and the client has not complied within 30 days, notify the HSR team of the non-compliance so that the application can be denied.**

There should not be a 2 or 3 month delay in MFIP application processing. If you have specific cases where this is true, you can send them to the TTL’s for research and follow up with the HSR team. Applications are to be processed within 30 days of the date received. We do however, hold off on denials if there is an indication that the client will be eligible shortly or there is a delay in information reaching us (via ECF or email).

The TTLs are NOT involved in getting the referrals (they do not do the manual referral or contact the HSR team to get one done). The only involvement the TTLs have in this process is to assign the referral to the appropriate ESP once the HSR generates it to the Coordination Office Queue. TTL’s will note on the referrals that the case is a 7th month
sanction referral and indicate the MFIP application date so that the ESP knows they must engage/contact the client more quickly.

Section 5.15 CLIENTS IN A HOLD STATUS

This non-activity temporarily places a client in “suspension.” It is usually used when there is some time before anticipated entry into another activity, for example, between the completion of a secondary assessment and the start of school. This should be a short time period, no more than 90 days. Longer periods should usually be filled with work activities.

The Job Counselor must continue to maintain contact with the client while in hold status. Document this in the case file. Document in the case notes when the holding status is to begin and end. Document the reason for the hold.

Section 5.16 RE-ENROLLMENT IN MFIP WITH THE SAME ES PROVIDER

A participant will select an ES Provider at the orientation. However, if the participant has enrollment history on the Maxis/WF1 they will be reassigned to the last agency enrolled with on the Maxis/WF1 system within the last 90 days. At that point the participant can request a transfer to another agency.

Section 5.17 WHEN TO CHANGE MFIP AGENCIES

Changing providers prior to the overview should be at the participant’s request. The participant must initiate the transfer. If the participant did not initiate the change a transfer is not appropriate. If a referral was assigned to an agency and that agency discovers the participant is already enrolled and active with another Hennepin County MFIP ESP, the erroneous referral must be TRANSFERRED to the currently active agency. Do not DECLINE or INACTIVE: the referral is probably needed to reactivate the Interface.

Approved moves after the overview: This is an agreement made between the sending provider, the receiving provider, and the client. The participant must initiate the transfer. All three must agree to the transfer.

Do NOT instruct the client to find their own agency.

Do NOT suggest for any reason, to the participant that they may be more easily served or appropriate for another agency. Only respond with transfer information when the
CLIENT initiates the conversation. This includes moving clients from one office site to another with the same agency. Every ESP is expected to provide interpreter services to their clients or have a staff person who speaks the client’s language.

If the client requested a change as a result of an unresolved conflict between the provider and the participant, the provider should conduct an in-house conciliation prior to the transfer. This may resolve the conflict and avoid the transfer.

If the sending agency does not agree that the reason to transfer is valid, then the sending agency can say NO to the transfer. The sending agency does not have to transfer a case because the client wants it. The client has the option to appeal this decision.

The only acceptable reason for the receiving agency to deny the transfer is if the agency site is already full and closed for referrals by Hennepin County. However, if it is in the best interest of the participant, the agency may choose to accept the transfer anyway. Hennepin County is no longer “closing” agencies for referrals but assigning based on % of slots contracted. Agencies are only rarely removed from the assignment lists. If there are reasons to believe your agency should be exempt from receiving transferred cases, you will need to request your agency be “closed” through your contract manager. If your agency is not closed you MUST accept appropriate transfers.

The client may request a transfer to another provider if the client moved across town and that would negatively affect the client’s ability to participate. An agency that is closer on the same bus line isn’t really a reason to transfer.

Reminder: Two parent families must be transferred together.

Reminder: An agency is allowed to transfer the client to another agency (WERC) if the client is threatening/abusive to staff and it is dangerous to serve the client at their office. Follow the instructions in the section on Work Place Violence Issues.

Moves not allowed: When a participant receives a Notice of Intent to Sanction (NOITS) or is in a sanction. A mutually acceptable change could be approved after the sanction is cured.

Direct questions, problems or concerns to your contract manager or to Terri Ellingsworth at 612-673-6233.

Section 5.18 HOW TO TRANSFER A CASE BETWEEN AGENCIES

The sending agency will:
• Contact the manager/director of the prospective agency (best match based on the transfer reason) to discuss the case, ask if there is an open slot and if they will accept
the case. It is the responsibility of the sending agency to contact the prospective agency and make the arrangements for the transfer.

- Obtain the permission of the receiving provider to transfer the case and the name of the contact person at that provider.
- Complete the “MFIP Transfer of Employment Service Provider Form” and send a copy or note in WF1 copy is in ECF when the case is transferred.
- Update WF1 with the transfer information. Leave the current WF1 activities open and transfer the case. In a two-parent household, each parent must be coded on WF1 and transferred.
- Retain the original paper/electronic case file.
- Photocopy pertinent information needed by the receiving provider. Verifications such as medical forms, employment information, SSI/RSDI applications/updates, should be faxed into ECF.
- List the recent expenses paid by the agency, such as for car repair and job search clothing.
- Send copies or note in WF1 copies are in ECF of any work place violence incident reports on the client. Inform the receiving agency prior to the transfer.
- Send the photocopies to the receiving agency or note in WF1 photocopies are in ECF along with the transfer form.
- Retain a copy of the transfer form in the paper or electronic case file.
- Inform the child care assistance worker assigned to your agency of the case transfer.

The receiving provider will:

- Accept the case transfer on WF1
- When the WF1 transfer is completed, notify the TTLs by email and attach a copy of the completed transfer form. Send it to: HSPH.ES.TEAM.TTL@hennepin.us.
- Begin a paper or electronic case file.
- Retain a copy of the transfer form in the case.

The TTLs will:

- Will update the MAXIS and ECF system based on the information provided by the receiving provider, Referral questions should be directed to the TTL phone # 612-596-8636.

Section 5.19 ESP AGENCY TRANSFERS & CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

The Child Care Assistance area must be notified when a client transfers to a new agency. Many times the child care worker is not aware of the change until the new agency submits a new application/child care plan. Please follow the below case transfer process for families with open Child Care Assistance.

Steps to take when transferring a case with active Child Care Assistance:
· Review the case on MEC2 to determine whether there is an open Child Care Assistance case.

· If the Employment Plan is ending or close to ending and Child Care Assistance is active send an updated Child Care Plan noting the new ESP agency. Make sure to recommend when current child care ends.

· If the current Employment Plan is appropriate and Child Care Assistance is active send an updated Child Care Plan noting the agency change and continue care for one month from the current date. This will allow the client to meet with the new ESP, create a new EP, and notify Child Care Assistance via the Child Care Plan of any changes to the child care service.

Access to MEC2:
Employment Counselors should all have access to MEC2. Any request for DHS/HC data system access should be reviewed by the ESP supervisor/manager. Further information is available on the DWP & MFIP Employment Service Providers site under “Request for System Access.”

Determining Status of Child Care Assistance Case:
· Access MEC2
· Go to Case Overview window
· Review status of CCMF (MFIP Child Care – example included is active)

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Section 5.20 TRANSFERS TO FSS & FSS-X (WERC & WERC III)

Listed below are the categories that have automatic FSS eligibility and must be transferred to FSS/FSS-X.

- **Ill or Incapacitated**: condition prevents client from working 20 hours per week and condition is expected to last 6 months or more
- **Hard to Employ (Mental Illness, IQ below 80, Learning Disabled, MR/DD):** condition prevents client from working 20 hours per week and condition is expected to last 6 months or more
- **Hard to Employ (unemployable):** condition is expected to last 6 months or more
- **Pending SSI/SSDI Application**
- **Family Violence Waiver** (extended cases only)

**FSS (pre 60 months) cases that will remain in the ESP community:**
- Clients ill/incap more than 30 days but less than 6 months
- Clients needed in the home (NIH)
- Special Medical Criteria (SMC) for household member (waivered services, SED, SPMI). Clients with a child or an adult in the household who meets the special medical criteria for home care services or a home and community-based waiver services program, severe emotional disturbance or serious and persistent mental illness
- Clients with the Family Violence Waiver
- Clients diagnosed as MI, LD or IQ below 80 and condition does not limit their ability to work
- Immigrant caregivers in the county less than 12 months
- Clients who are age 60 or older

**Post 60 month cases (FSS-X WERC III):**
All post-60 month extended MFIP cases (WERC III) become FSS-X cases and are coded accordingly. The only exceptions are clients extended over 60 months for the following criteria: working extension, needed in the home or special medical criteria. The working extended client remains with their ESP.

Section 5.21  FSS/FSS-X REFERRAL PROCESS:

**Referrals to Hennepin County WERC:**

1) Complete FSS Referral Form. Fax to ECF or mail with the rest of the case documents to WERC/WERCIII

2) Transfer client to **Tom Mueller-WERC WSA09/WERC TIER III WSA09** on WF1. (Refer to “Passing the Person” document for transfer procedures on WF1)

3) Inform the TTL’s via (Fax 612-632-8843 or email hsph.es.team.ttl@hennepin.us) in order to update the maxis with the new ESP

4) Fax client referral documents from paper file to client file in ECF.
• PPL does not accept FSS transfers directly from the ESPs. Please refer all transfers to Hennepin County WERC.

Case transfers from WERC/WERCIII and PPL to ESPs

When clients are no longer in FSS exemption category the case will be transferred out to regular ESP’s. The case will be transferred back to the original ESP that had the client. Those cases that originated in WERC will be transferred out to regular ESP by client request. WERC may send a courtesy contact to the ESP before transferring the case.

Section 5.22 FSS OVERVIEW OF HSR & ESP RESPONSIBILITIES

FSS is a state-funded employment service track designed to serve participants who are at risk of long term welfare dependency due to employment barriers.

With the implementation of FSS it is imperative that HSRs update Maxis with all factors occurring in a participant's life that reflect FSS eligibility. To make this possible we need to ensure clear communication between ESPs and HSR teams. Each caregiver will be assigned an ES status code that will reflect FSS eligibility in maxis on the STAT/EMPS panel.

Some FSS cases will remain in the ESP community while others must be transferred to WERC or PPL.

Section 5.23 ESP RESPONSIBILITY FOR FSS MAXIS CODING

Per ESP policy, Status Updates will be faxed to the TTL/MFIP Coordination Office at 612-632-8843 or emailed FSS Template to HSPH.ES.TEAM.TTL@HENNEPIN.US from ESP requesting a case to be updated with FSS eligibility. (ESP’s may opt to fill out and email the FSS Not Coded Template instead of a Status Update form.) For each eligibility factor, the ESP must include specific information. If the requested information is not provided, the TTL will contact the ESP. The case will not be updated unless we have all information needed to update the case. ESPs are required to provide the following on Status Update or FSS Template:

- **Ill/incap** – Must include disability begin and end date. If permanent, disability must be reviewed at least annually per policy.
- **Needed in the home** – Which member need to be cared for, by which caregiver from what date to what date.
- **Hard to employ** – Which hard to employ criteria, MI, MR, IQ below 80, LD or Unemployable
DO NOT include the following criteria’s on Status Update or Template

- **FVW** – Do not fax status updates for clients under FVW since the TTLs receive the waiver to update maxis anyway.
- **Age 60 and over** – MAXIS automatically updates case once age is reached
- **Immigrant in country less than 12 months** – These cases are coded at application

**NOTE:** **Immigrants in country more than 12 months** – After the caregiver has been in the country for more than 12 months the TTLs would need to know if the case should remain FSS because client fits the criteria for extended FSS eligibility or end FSS eligibility under that category. DHS states this must be reviewed at 6 month intervals. Case note in WF1 and documentation needed to support this in WF1.

**Section 5.24  HSR RESPONSIBILITY FOR FSS MAXIS CODING**

Update MAXIS STAT panels for all participants eligible under FSS criteria and approve the last result. If a participant loses FSS eligibility the case may still be eligible depending if other participants are coded with FSS eligibility. Maxis background considers all STAT panels updated and assigns ES status based on background hierarchy. If ESP case is transferred because of FSS eligibility, HSR is also responsible for updating maxis STAT/EMPS panel with new ESP information.

**FSS Maxis Coding Questions**
TTLs at 612-596-8636 or e-mail hsph.es.team.ttl@hennepin.us

**Section 5.25  FSS END DATES**

Each FSS case needs to have an end date or FSS eligibility will automatically end. With WF1 you will receive referrals that have FSS indicated on the Referral Interface. As usual, these cases need to be evaluated with ESP standards for FSS criteria before referring to WERC.

In the early stages of the implementation of FSS, the TTL/MFIP Coordination Office provided end dates for ill/incap cases that were being transferred to an FSS servicing
agency because of the criteria lasting 6 months or more. We failed to provide the ESPs with those end dates. In light of this we decided it would be best if the ESP provides us with the end date to ensure that MAXIS coincides with the ending of the employment plan.

New Procedure
When sending the FSS template (hsph.es.team ttl@co.hennepin.mn.us) or status update (fax 612-632-8843) to the TTLs for FSS coding, please include end dates for the following categories:

- Ill/Incap
- Needed in the home
- SED/SPMI (Usually these two should be reviewed annually)
- FVW – already included on FVW plan faxed to TTL so do not include on template or status update

Exception – Waiver Services; if a client is eligible for waiver services the TTL will verify in our MAXIS MMIS system and provide the ESP with end date.

FSS staff are not completing above unless there is suspected forgery. To check with doctor for every medical would be time consuming and may affect client benefits. Below statement reflects current activity.

REMINDER- If medical opinion form appears inaccurate or forgery is suspected, the job or vocational counselor should contact the medical professional that filled out the form to verify the information on the form.

Usually the nurse can verify the information so don’t worry about speaking directly to the doctor. There are three specific questions that should be asked to help clarify the information.

1. Did the medical professional fill out the form? (There has been a great increase in forged forms so this question is VERY important)
2. Does the disability prevent the client from working in any capacity?
3. How long is the restriction?
   - If the doctor can not specify for how long, then the form is good for only 3 months
   - If the doctor gives a disability date longer than 6 months, provide us with that date
   - If the doctor states “indefinite” or “a year” then use a date one year from the date the form was signed
**New wording and formatting is currently underway to the current medical exam form. We hope this will make verifying information easier.**

FSS cases coded under the following criteria **do not need an end date but the ESP must inform the TTL when the criteria has ended:**

- MI
- MR
- LD
- IQ Below 80
- Unemployable
- IMIG – TTLs will send an e-mail asking if the client continues to be eligible for FSS

Based solely on the following question; "Is the client in FSS ESL/Skills Training?"?

**Action Request**

We are asking that each job counselor review their files to locate these cases and **request new verification ASAP**. For example, FSS cases that were coded ill/incap and needed in the home effective 2/10 have an end date coded in Maxis of 8/31/10; effective 3/10 end date in Maxis is 9/30/10 and so on. **Once the end date approaches, MAXIS will automatically end FSS eligibility so it is imperative for you to track these dates.**

All questions, suggestions or comments should be directed to your supervisor. Questions regarding FSS coding in MAXIS contact the TTL/MFIP Coordination Office by email at hspf.es.team.ttl@hennepin.us or by phone at 612-596-8636.

**Section 5.26 WF1 PASSING THE PERSON**

**Client referral should not be at your agency, referral has not been ‘accepted.’**

Transfer from agency referral queue to new agency referral queue:

Required steps
- Select Agency Location
- Choose a program
- Select Pending in referral status field
- Click Filter
- From the resulting list, select the one(s) to transfer
- Select action to transfer (if not on the list, re-check the previous steps)
- Complete action. Able to transfer to all other agencies and staff in WF1
The client will now be in the new ESP agency referral queue.

Complete the Transfer Form and attach it to an email. Send it to: hsph.es.team.ttl@hennepin.us. This will ensure that MAXIS and ECF are updated.

Client should not be in your staff queue, referral has NOT had an ‘app’ completed.

Transfer from staff referral queue
  Required steps
  • Select a program
  • Application status must be “No application”
  • Click Filter
  • From the resulting list, select the one(s) to transfer
  • Select action to transfer-from bottom drop down list
  • Complete action. Able to transfer to all other agencies or staff in WF1
  If the person *already has an application* (action column says “elig not enroll”), click the name hyperlink. Go to Program tab. On the application summary close the application page. Go back to staff referral Queue and filter again. You will then be able to transfer the person.
  • Client will be in new staff queue and new staff will have a ‘Tickle’ notification of transfer
  Complete the Transfer Form and attach it to an email. Send it to: hsph.es.team.ttl@Hennepin.us. This will ensure that MAXIS and ECF are updated.

Referral has an ‘app’ or has an ‘app’ and been enrolled

Transfer from History. This is only available if the staff assigned is the logged on user.
  • Record Assignment page allows you to transfer the person to another staff in your agency
  • Agency Transfer page allows you to transfer the person to
    o another agency within the same region
    o another location within your agency
    o Another staff person that works in the location you select

  If there is a pending app w/out a referral in the staff queue-close app after transfer
  Complete the Transfer Form and attached it to an email to: hsph.es.team.ttl@Hennepin.us. This will ensure that MAXIS and ECF are updated.

Transfer from Record Manager-Mass transfer caseload management.
  • From the Record Manager column on the home page, select “Person”
  • Select “Mass record transfers/assignment”
  • Search for the staff person whose records will be transferred
  • Select the program
  • From the resulting list, select the person records you want to transfer
- You can transfer them to another location within your agency or to another staff person within the agency

Complete the Transfer Form and attach it to an email to: hsp.h.es.team.ttl@Hennepin.us. This will ensure that MAXIS and ECF are updated.

Generate a referral from the Outcome page - Client or Agency requests a different Agency.

- Complete the outcome fields.
- Primary exit reason must be one of the following:
  - Moved from area
  - Administrative separation
  - Voluntary separation
- “Send new referral to” field will allow you to generate a referral to another agency that serves the same county

Client will now be on new agency’s referral queue

Complete the Transfer Form and attached it to an email to: hsp.h.es.team.ttl@Hennepin.us. This will ensure that MAXIS and ECF are updated.

(Hennepin County Pass the Person, updated: 4/16/10)

Section 5.27  MFIP TERMINATION

An MFIP case may open and close many times in a year. It may close because the HRF or some form has not been received, but if the form is received within the 30 days of closure the case will be reinstated (reopened) back to the date it closed. There will be no time break. A new WF1 referral will not be generated upon reinstatement. For this reason, it is important to leave the WF1 case open for at least 30-31 days after it is closed on MAXIS.

ESP should wait until 30-31 days after the case is terminated on MAXIS, check the status on WF1 and then terminate the WF1 case. Upon notification by Hennepin County that the client’s case has been closed on MAXIS, send the HC Termination Notice to inform the client the ES case is closed and to offer community resources. This is done as a courtesy to the client. Retain a copy of the termination letter in the client's case file.

Eligibility for MFIP employment services ends on the date the MFIP case is terminated. Any MFIP services or funds provided after that date are in error. However, sometimes the HSR will terminate the MFIP grant and not notify the Job Counselor right away. In this case terminate the case back to the date the MFIP grant was closed. If support services were made after the termination date, make a case note why they were provided. The termination date would be the same as the MAXIS termination date.
MFIP terminations should be submitted and processed as they occur. The MFIP program depends on accurate and up to date information for budgeting, reporting, and program planning.

(a) Terminations for Fraud

MFIP fraud results in disqualification of the caretaker, meaning his or her needs are removed from the grant. The first instance results in a 12 month disqualification, a second incidence leads to a 24 month disqualification, and a third results in a permanent disqualification. The TANF months are still counted while in the disqualification period. The HSR should notify the Employment Services provider via a Status Update form if a fraud disqualification occurs. The Job Counselor will continue to work with this client. The client is required to develop an EP and comply with the activities in the plan or sanctions will be imposed against the MFIP grant. When the disqualification period ends the HSR will inform the Job Counselor.

Note: MFIP child care services are not available to the client while in fraud disqualification. Do not approve MFIP child care assistance under the MFIP sub-program for families when both parents have been disqualified from MFIP due to MFIP fraud. In a one parent household, do not approve MFIP child care if the parent has been disqualified from MFIP and there is a child only MFIP grant. These families would need to apply for the Basic Sliding Fee (BSF) sub-program and may be subject to a waiting list. If the family includes 2 parents, and only 1 parent has been disqualified for MFIP fraud, you may still authorize child care assistance under the MFIP sub-program if:

- The MFIP parent continues to meet the eligibility requirements in Chapter 4.3.3.3 (MFIP Overview).
  AND
- The non-MFIP parent meets the eligibility requirements in Chapter 4.3.12 (Basic Sliding Fee (BSF)).

Section 5.28 REAPPLICATION AFTER CASE CLOSURE

Sometimes people whose MFIP case is closed need Employment Services in order to re-establish MFP eligibility. This can happen when a client did not qualify for a post-60-month extension or when MFIP has been closed due to persistent non-compliance with Employment Services requirements.

The person will need to file an MFIP reapplication with Hennepin County Eligibility Supports if MFIP has been closed at least one full calendar month or there’s a one-month break in eligibility (e.g. for sanction disqualifications). Both ES/extension requirements and financial eligibility requirements will need to be met before MFIP is reopened.
- MFIP closed due to no extension basis/client now asserts there is Family Violence: The ESP will approve an EP with the Family Violence provisions (working together with the client and a person trained in domestic violence) if appropriate. The EP will be sent to the TTLs, who will notify the HSR team to reopen the MFIP case. Once the WF1 referral is received, the ESP will reopen the case on WF1 and monitor the extension.

- MFIP closed due to non-compliance: The ESP can require the client to participate and be in compliance for up to 30 days in order to cure the sanction. Hennepin County policy is that the normal compliance time is two weeks. If an agency, using best professional judgment, requires compliance in excess of two weeks, the reasoning must be clearly documented in the case notes. The ESP will determine compliance and notify the HSR team when and if MFIP can be reopened. The ESP will determine compliance and notify the HSR team when and if MFIP can be reopened. The activities needed to comply should follow what was in the NOITS if still applicable. If no longer applicable then a new EP should be completed and the client will need to comply with the current EP activities in order to lift the sanction. The EP should be appropriate to the situation.

- MFIP was not extended because the client was sanctioned in the 60th month: Before MFIP can be reopened, the client must meet a current extension basis and verify s/he was exempt from Employment Services participation or had good cause in the 60th month. The ESP will determine if good cause or an exemption existed (in some cases, exemption eligibility may be determined by the HSR team and/or the TTLs) and will notify the TTLs. There is no time limit for determination of good cause/exemption, but probably the more time that’s gone by the less likely it is that the client will be able to establish eligibility.

The re-applicant will be referred to appropriate ESP in these circumstances:

- MFIP closed due to no extension basis and now the client claims and submits medical opinion form for the Hard-To-Employ basis. This person will be referred to appropriate ESP for an assessment. If eligible, MFIP will be reopened and appropriate ESP will be the assigned ESP.

- Applicants who request a Family Violence Waiver after the MFIP termination (at 60 months) are directed to WERC staff to write the EP if they have never been on assistance in Hennepin County or were with an ESP that is no longer contracted with the County. (Other extension basis would also be explored.)

- Applicants who were never on assistance in Hennepin County or were with an ESP that is no longer contracted with the County and have submitted the medical opinion form for FSS.

The re-applicant will not be referred to an ESP prior to when MFIP reopens in the following situations:
MFIP closed due to no extension basis and the client now claims there is an illness or incapacitating (including own) disability; needed in the home; or Special Medical Criteria. The HSR teams, with input from the Transition Team, will determine eligibility for the extension. These clients will be referred to the ESP only if they were in sanction during the 60th month and need to establish good cause/exemption

- MFIP closed due to no extension basis and now the client is working the required number of hours for the employed extension. The HSR and the Transition Team will determine eligibility for the extension. Clients will be re-referred to the previous ESP via WF1 referral report after MFIP is re-approved. They will be re-referred to the previous ESP prior to MFIP being reopened only if there was a sanction in the 60th month and good cause or exemption needs to be established.

Section 5.29 OUT OF COUNTY TRANSFERS

Refer to the procedures in the DHS Manual.
Article VI. MFIP TRANSITION 48-60 MONTHS

Communication between the Job Counselor and the Human Services Representative (HSR) is crucial in determining eligibility for extensions. Both need to obtain and share information with each other to prepare for the Exit Interview as well as in time to provide 10 day notices to clients regarding their case status.

Section 6.01  54 MONTH CHECKLIST

When MFIP participants are reaching their 60 month limit on MFIP they are required to attend an Exit Interview. The Exit Interview is conducted by the Transition Team Leader (TTL) as well as HSRs and the Job Counselors.

The HSR and the Job Counselor must prepare in advance for the interviews. Part of the preparation includes an MFIP 54 month checklist. The Job Counselors are expected to do case file reviews using the checklist shortly before the date of the exit interview. Completing this review and the follow-up tasks identified prior to the 60th month will help prevent delays in establishing eligibility for extensions.

Send a copy of the completed 54 month checklist to the TTLs.

Section 6.02  THE EXIT INTERVIEW

The Exit Interviews are scheduled and coordinated by the TTL Team. They are conducted between 60 and 180 days prior to the month 60. Invitations are handled by phone or mail when needed.

The Job Counselor and the TTL will conduct the Exit Interview. In addition, the HSR and the Job Counselor supervisor and other involved staff may attend. The client may also bring a friend or advocate.

The Exit Interview generally follows the items on the MFIP 60-Month Exit Plan. The client declares whether or not they want to apply for an extension and any needed follow-up steps as well as who is responsible for the follow-up is noted.

Decisions regarding the extension are generally NOT made at this time of the interview because more often than not, the client’s circumstances change by month 60.

Clients are told that they fit into one of three categories:

- Eligible for extension “if nothing changes” before month 60
- Not eligible for extension “if nothing changes” before month 60
• Need more information

Section 6.03  TIPS WHEN EXTENDING (OR NOT EXTENDING) MFIP CASES

At the time of the exit interview, the Job Counselor should be sure to understand whether the client has requested an extension, what the (possible) basis of extension is, whether any follow-up is needed, and who is responsible for that follow-up. Even if the Job Counselor is unable to attend the interview it is important to call the Transition Team Leader (TTL) for an update.

The ESP may assist with any follow up (e.g., referring to a provider for an assessment, sending medical documentation, enrolling the client in supported work, etc.), however, the extension determination is made by County staff.

Section 6.04  EFFECT OF SANCTIONS AT MONTH 49 AND BEYOND

A client must be in compliance in the 60th month to be considered for an extension. Sanctioned cases must be reviewed for good cause or ES exemptions. Refer to the DHS manual for more information on sanctions.

Job Counselors should communicate to the MFIP client the importance of staying out of all types of sanction, particularly starting in the 49th month.
Article VII. AFTER 60 MONTHS

Section 7.01 AFTER THE MFIP 60 MONTHS

Each recommendation to extend or not extend a family beyond the 60 month limit will need to be reviewed and adopted or modified by a county representative. Based on the review the client may or may not be able to continue with a grant.

Section 7.02 EXTENSION STATUS NOTIFICATION/PROCEDURES

Extended clients are eligible for the same support services available to clients during their first 60 months. Follow the same hourly tracking procedures for all of the extended cases that are used for the pre-60-month cases.

The client is eligible for an extension under one of the categories listed in the DHS Manual. Refer to the Manual for guidelines.

Section 7.03 CLIENT IS NOT EXTENDED

The TTL Team will review the case and send an e-mail to the HSR and Job Counselor and/or ESP regarding the decision not to extend. If the HSR and/or Job Counselor subsequently receive information that indicates the client may be eligible for an extension, s/he should contact the TTL Team right away.

The client will receive a MAXIS notice from the HSR informing them that they are not eligible for an extension. The HSR will close MFIP cash and determine eligibility for ongoing Food Support and Medical Assistance. The Job Counselor will send a termination notice to the client and terminate the case on WF1.

Section 7.04 CLIENT IS EXTENDED

The TTL Team will review the case and inform the HSR and ESP regarding the extension decision. Based on the decision, the ESP will be directed to either terminate the WF1 case or transfer the case to WERCIII. The WERC FSS Counselors will work with all post 60 month hardship extension cases with the exception of clients extended over 60 months for the following criteria: working extension, needed in the home or special medical criteria. WERC FSS Counselors will conduct any redetermination based upon the available data in ECF and Maxis at the time of the request.
Or, in the case of working extended cases, the ESP may retain the case and continue working with the client. The Job Counselor will contact the client regarding their Employment Service Requirements based on the working extension. The HSR’s and the ESP will monitor the working extensions. The HSR’s must monitor that the client is meeting minimum work requirements. The HSR will notify the ESP via status Update if the client does not meet the minimum work requirements.

The client will receive an MFIP Extension Information Notice from the HSR informing them that their extension was approved and indicating the extension category. MAXIS coding and tracking the extension information will be handled by the HSR Team.

Extended clients are eligible for the same support services available to clients during their first 60 months.
Article VIII. DEALING WITH ISSUES OF VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Section 8.01 LEGAL DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

By both civil (518b.01) and criminal (609.2242) statute, domestic abuse is defined in Minnesota as physical harm, injury, assault (or fear of such), terrorist threats, or criminal sexual conduct committed by a family or household member against a family or household member. Family or household member is defined as:

- Spouse or former spouse
- Parents and children
- Persons related by blood
- Persons residing together
- Persons who have a child in common
- A man and a pregnant woman, if the man is alleged to be the father of the unborn child.
- Persons involved in a significant romantic or sexual relationship

The legal definition is important for getting an Order for Protection and is helpful to police officers when they are deciding whether or not to make an arrest. Note: MFIP clients are not required to obtain the Order for Protection.

*Family Violence Waiver Option*

The Family Violence Waiver (FVW) Option stops the MFIP 60-month time clock. Participants who have been determined eligible for the Family Violence Waiver are also considered to meet the eligibility criteria for Family Stabilization Services. Clients in this category are required to develop a FSS EP and follow FSS service requirements. These participants must work with a job counselor and/or FSS case manager and a person trained in domestic violence (if they are not already working with a domestic violence advocate) to develop an FSS EP. The job counselor and/or FSS case manager has the final approval of an FSS EP. The abuse must be verified. Hennepin County will accept the signature of the domestic abuse advocate on the EP for the safety waiver as verification. The advocates are trained in this subject. The domestic violence advocate will retain in their case files any documentation of the abuse such as police reports, OFP forms, medical statements, etc. They should not be in the WF1 case file.

Refer to the DHS Manual for further information on definitions of “person trained in domestic violence” and contact phone numbers. Refer to the DHS manual for FVW/FSS procedures for non-compliance, revising the EP and suggested activities in the EP, etc.
**Communication and Contract Requirements**

Refer to the DHS Manual for communication requirements between HSR and job counselor and FSS participants. In addition to the requirements outlined by DHS, Hennepin County has additional requirements.

When any action is taken concerning the FVW option and the participant’s FSS status the job counselor will inform the client and the TTL team by sending a copy of the MFIP Waiver Notice. The MFIP Waiver Notice contains a sentence to indicate the EP was signed by the client, the domestic violence advocate and the job counselor.

Do not send other supporting documentation to the TTL’s including police reports, OFP forms, medical documentation of the abuse, etc. They do not want nor do they retain other documents submitted by the ESP’s related to the waiver.

The TTL’s use only the completed MFIP Waiver Notice to code the maxis panels for FSS. The TTL fax is: 612-632-8843.

Review and renewal of the FVW/EP. To be completed every 3 months. Results of the review should be completed and provided to the TTLs prior to the 10 day notice especially for the extended cases. It is the job counselor’s responsibility to monitor the FVW and track the compliance and review dates.

For non-compliance with the FVW/EP and subsequent removal of the FVW and return to regular MFIP and for denial of the FVW and termination of the FVW and return to regular MFIP EP refer to DHS Manual for guidance and procedures.

*(a) MAXIS Coding*

The Job Counselor must provide timely information to the TTL team. Correct MAXIS coding is very important. The TTL team codes the MAXIS panels for the months on the FVW based on the information received from the job counselor. The client may be charged with unnecessary overpayments for months when the client was not eligible for the FVW and banked or extended months were used as the basis for continued MFIP benefits.

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**Section 8.02 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GUIDELINES**

Victims of domestic violence must develop an Employment Plan (EP) that includes Family Violence Waiver activities. Refer to the DHS manual for instructions.

The Family Violence Waiver is available to both men and women. The victim may or may not be living with the abuser. The job counselor and the MFIP agency MUST maintain confidentiality for the client.
For data privacy and safety reasons, the client may not feel comfortable discussing the graphic details and the extent of the violence with the job counselor. It is not the job counselor’s responsibility to determine if the client is/is not a victim of domestic violence. The domestic violence advocate will determine this and will probably not disclose all the details with the job counselor. Any verifications of domestic violence should be kept with the domestic violence advocate, not the MFIP case file. Do not send details of the domestic abuse to the TTL’s.

The TTL’s only need the MFIP Waiver Notice. The MFIP Waiver Notice has a sentence to attest to there being 3 signatures on the EP signature page. Fax the MFIP Waiver Notice to TTL’s at 612-632-8843.

What should be in the MFIP case file for verification of the domestic abuse? The completed WF1 FSS/EP signature page that is signed by the client, the domestic violence advocate and the job counselor will be considered sufficient verification of the domestic violence for the MFIP case file. By signing off on the EP, it is implied that the domestic violence advocate has knowledge of the circumstance or credible evidence that supports the client’s statement and that the client has sought assistance for the abuse.

(a) **When the Domestic Violence Shelter is in Another County**

When the client moves to a domestic violence shelter in another county the client will remain a Hennepin County MFIP participant. The MFIP grant will continue through Hennepin County. The client will continue to work with the domestic violence advocate and the Hennepin County Job Counselor. There needs to be a current EP in place that includes Family Violence Waiver activities.

(b) **Moving to HC with a FVW from another county**

When a client moves to Hennepin County with an existing FVW the Job Counselor will review the EP to determine if it is still appropriate. If it is okay, then the agency can continue with the existing plan. If it is not okay then it should be revised or an EP developed. Send the client the Family Violence Waiver Notice to notify them of the decision.

(c) **Domestic Violence and Caretakers under age 20**

Minor caretakers will have the same opportunities to develop an FVW as other MFIP participants. The school requirements may or may not be a part of the FVW activities based on the client’s safety issues. Other activities such as work or job search may be included depending on the client’s safety issues. Follow the same procedures as stated in the DHS manual and send a status update to the TTL fax: 612-632-8843.
(d) **Examples of Domestic Abuse Questions to Ask:**

The topic of domestic abuse is often difficult to discuss with clients. Asking a client if they are in a domestic abuse situation will rarely bring about disclosure. Listed below are examples of questions that may help when interacting with the client.

- Is your partner supportive in your employment goals?
- How do you work out transportation issues? Who gets to use the car?
- How will the chores get done when you are working? Will they be shared?
- Are you afraid to go home?
- Are you in a relationship in which you feel you are treated badly?
- Does your partner try to control you? In what way does your partner try to control you?
- Do you ever feel you have to “walk on eggshells”?
- Do you ever feel afraid of your partner?
- What happens when you disagree or argue?
- Does your partner ever threaten you?
- Does your partner ever destroy property?
- Has your partner forced you to have sex when you didn’t want to? What happens if you say no?
- Has your partner ever pushed, shoved, grabbed, hit or slapped you?
- Do you have weapons in the house? Does your partner ever threaten you with them?
- Are you safe now?

In addition, the Job Counselor may have to rely on observation and the client’s non-verbal communication for indications of domestic violence.

a) **Suggested Sanction Process for Non-compliance with Family Violence Waiver EP:**

In response to questions (3/2014) about the sanction process for clients who are not in compliance with their FVW Employment Plan, DHS suggested the job counselor follow these steps.

1. Send letter to client to come in to review EP and safety activities.
2. Client does not come in.
3. Send status update to HSR to remove FVW.
4. Review the most recent employment plan and/or all case file materials to determine if client qualifies for good cause.
5. Invite client to a face-to-face meeting by sending a letter to client that FVW has been removed and MFIP clock will start to accrue, invite them to come in to revised EP and safety activities.
6. Schedule a home visit.
7. If home visit is unsuccessful, send information that would have been covered in face-to-face meeting to participant.
8. Send NOITS
9. Send status update to sanction

Section 8.03 REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect. If you work with children and/or families, you are encouraged to report suspected abuse or neglect. You are encouraged to make a child protection report if you know or have reason to believe that:

- A child is being neglected or abused or
- Has been neglected or abused in the preceding three years.

To file a report, call Hennepin County Child Protection Screening at 612-348-3552, or call the police.

Each Job Counselor and agency must review the statute and rely on their own legal counsel to determine if they are considered a Mandated Reporter.

(a) How to document reports to Child Protection

Make a case note in the client file that a referral was made to Child Protection and the name of the agency staff person to whom you spoke. Do not include any specifics. Example “Referral made to Jane Doe at CP on 5/25/03.” Use a separate sheet of paper to write out the specific details of the referral. Retain this paper in a separate file used for all Child Protection referrals from the agency. The agency supervisor may want to keep all referrals in a special location.

(b) Data Privacy Issues related to requests from Child Protection

The Child Protection worker asking for the information is actually conducting a child protection investigation. While the ESP is correct that the ESP cannot share the information simply because we are part of the welfare system, the ESP should share the information because of the statute due to the Child Protection Investigation statute. MN Stat. 626.556 Subd. 10(h) states:

(h) The local welfare agency responsible for conducting a family assessment or investigation shall collect available and relevant information to determine child safety,
risk of subsequent child maltreatment, and family strengths and needs and share not public information with an Indian's tribal social services agency without violating any law of the state that may otherwise impose duties of confidentiality on the local welfare agency in order to implement the tribal state agreement.

It goes on to list what must be requested (it doesn’t include anything specific about ESP information, but gives the authority to access “all relevant information necessary for conducting the assessment or investigation.”) Agencies are required to comply.

If the supervisor still has concerns, she should talk with her agency data practices person.

Section 8.04 REPORTING VULNERABLE ADULT MALTREATMENT

An MFIP Job Counselor is encouraged to report any vulnerable adult maltreatment. (MN Statue 626.557 and 626.5572.) A vulnerable adult is a person 18 years of age or older who fits one of the following criteria: categorical and functional.

Categorical criteria includes a resident of a licensed facility, a recipient of services from a licensed facility or provider, a recipient of licensed home health care services or MA funded personal care attendant services (PCA).

Functional criteria includes a physical or mental infirmity or emotional dysfunction which impairs ability to meet basic needs (e.g. food, healthcare, shelter, and supervision) and impairment limits ability to protect self from maltreatment.

Definitions of abuse: Assault, criminal sexual conduct, conduct producing pain or injury, hitting, slapping, kicking, use of force to compel somebody to do something, Rule 40 violations, involuntary confinement, deprivation, etc. Other definitions of abuse include, use of drugs to injure or facilitate a crime, promotion of prostitution, staff-resident sexual contact.

(a) How to document reports to Adult Protection:

Report an incident of vulnerable adult maltreatment to 612-348-8526. All reports must be made within 24 hours of learning of the maltreatment. Make a case note in the client file that a referral was made to Adult Protection and the name of the agency staff person to whom you spoke. Do not include any specifics. Example “referral made to Jane Doe at AP on 5/20/06.” On a separate sheet of paper write out the specifics of the referral as Adult Protection may ask for a follow up paper copy of the report. Retain this paper in a separate file for all Adult Protection referrals from the agency. Do not keep this in the client file. The agency supervisor may want to keep all referrals in a special location.
Section 8.05  WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The phrase “workplace violence” encompasses several areas. For instance it may include: employee violence directed on another employee, an employee’s spouse/significant other/family member/friend who directs violence toward that employee and/or other staff, an MFIP client who directs violence toward an employee(s), an MFIP client’s spouse/significant other/family member/friend who directs violence toward an employee(s), and employee violence directed toward an MFIP client or client’s spouse/significant other/family member/friend.

Violence, or the threat of violence, has no place in any of Hennepin County’s MFIP agencies. An MFIP client must feel safe to access MFIP services at each agency, and, MFIP staff must feel safe to perform their role working with MFIP clients at their agencies and away from the office.

The guidelines contained in this section pertain only to the MFIP client. Therefore, each MFIP agency MUST have workplace violence policies and procedures in place to cover the various areas. Agency staff should be trained in all aspects of workplace violence. Each agency should commit to providing as rapid and coordinated a response as possible to violence or the threat of violence at their agency workplaces. Each individual and the agency collectively MUST act to prevent or defuse actual or threatened violent behavior at the workplaces.

The agency policies should define “workplace.” Workplace includes the agency site. But, is an MFIP client’s home, client’s school, client’s job or the public library part of the “workplace”? There may be a possible necessity of increased precautions during these visits and possible restrictions for these visits, if required, by the presence of weapons or the threat of violence. The agency must decide if the Job Counselor will conduct such visits.

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to work with a difficult MFIP client away from the agency site. The agency may utilize public areas such as the library or a restaurant. WERC has offered an area at their agency to use as a meeting place for your agency’s Job Counselor and the client. WERC has a security guard on hand.

WERC will also accept violent and/or threatening clients if the agency is no longer able to work with the client. The agency must follow the transfer case procedures for this situation and alert WERC to the reason for the transfer.

A client threat is always significant. They often say a lot about someone’s state of mind and also may indicate some kind of unresolved conflict that needs to be addressed.
(a) **Definitions**

The definitions below are from Hennepin County’s Workplace Violence Policy. They are provided as an aid to understanding Hennepin County’s Workplace Violence Policy. An MFIP agency may have different definitions and staff should be familiar with them.

**Violence**: Any act or instance of intentional physical harm or the threat of physical harm. (FYI, violence, or the threat of use, of an object as a dangerous weapon, including all firearms, is not permitted at the HC workplace, or on county property, including in a county vehicle, unless such possession or use is an approved requirement of the job.)

**Dangerous weapon**: A definition for dangerous weapon was purposefully not presented as the county policy is self-explanatory in this regard, referring to “any object” possessed, used or threatened to be used as a dangerous weapon, implying an intent to cause harm with it.

**Workplace**: Includes any place or site operated by HC or any place where and while a HC employee is conducting HC business. This specifically includes home visits by county employees recognizing the possible necessity of increased precautions during these visits and possible sanctions and/or restrictions for these visits, if required, by the presence of weapons or the threat of violence.

**Sanctions and/or restrictions**: For some behaviors, identified remedies (such as discipline, performance corrections, union contract, and criminal prosecution) may be most appropriate. But for some behaviors, particularly where the county is obligated to provide service, and does not have control of the individual, other remedies may be required (such as limited service hours, advance notice requirement for visit to a county office, flagging of files, identifying of clients or customers as a past behavior problem). Management gives employees permission not to enter into or continue with service in the face of violence or threatened violence in conformity with guidelines.

**Critical incident**: Behavior or comments that involve or could lead to violence or the threat of violence, by or against any employee of Hennepin County or other person while at a Hennepin County workplace.

Section 8.06 **VIOLENCE REDUCTION TECHNIQUES**

- To defuse potentially violent interactions, use normal conversation tones and a soft soothing voice.
- Acknowledge the person’s feelings and hear the person out. Show empathy and stay focused on the issue.
- Leave the area if necessary.
- If you appear too passive or aggressive, this may attract violence.
- Keep your head and use common sense.
• Use practical safety considerations; get physical distance, ask open-ended questions, and consider escape routes.

Section 8.07 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PROCEDURES

It is important to report and document a client’s threat and/or violent behavior. Even where a threat falls short of the legal standard for criminal prosecution, all users of County facilities or programs may be subject to various sanctions and/or restrictions for their threatening behavior.

Listed below is the procedure on how to handle client threats and violent behavior. This procedure is meant as a supplement to, not replacement of, the existing workplace violence guidelines developed at each agency.

- Assess the situation and follow the workplace violence guidelines set up within your agency. This may include a phone call to 911.
- Immediately inform your supervisor of the situation. Your agency will need to determine what course of action to take with the client. For example, based on your agency’s workplace violence guidelines, it may mean that the client will no longer receive home visits, or maybe the client will need to call for an appointment instead of dropping by the office, or the client may be assigned to a different Job Counselor.
- Determine from a client service standpoint if the incident should be case noted on WF1. When a potentially violent client is referred to your agency there will be an indication of his past behavior in his MFIP file from the previous agency. This would alert your agency to take some precautionary measures with this client.

(a) Procedure to Transfer the Case from ESP to Hennepin County WERC.

Based on the situation it may be in the best interest and safety of the ESP agency to transfer the case to Hennepin County where there is on-site security personnel available. The ESP manager should contact Ann White email: Ann.White@hennepin.us directly to discuss the situation and to get approval to transfer the case. The transfer will follow the same procedures for any ESP to ESP transfer.

Section 8.08 USE OF POLICE

If there is a physical assault by an MFIP client at the “workplace” (or if staff are out in the community) call 911 immediately. Seek guidance from the responding officers on what to do next regarding safety issues related to the incident. Follow up with any law enforcement investigation. Complete and send an Incident Report to Hennepin County Security. The MFIP agency must review the incident based on their workplace violence
polices and procedures and take any necessary action. Based on this review, the agency may decide to transfer this client to WERC.

Section 8.09  ORDERS FOR PROTECTION (OFP)

There may be an instance when a staff person decides it is necessary to have a personal Order For Protection (OFP) filed against an MFIP client. An OFP involves domestic violence. Note: the staff person is advised to work with legal counsel and/or someone trained in domestic violence to complete the OFP.

The MFIP agency will follow their workplace violence guidelines concerning the OFP to ensure staff safety. Retain copies of the OFP at the MFIP agency and inform agency staff of the situation. Send an Incident Report to HC Security (if one wasn’t sent before). If the staff person is comfortable with sharing the OFP information, send a copy to HC Security. HC will run a criminal report.

Upon request, Hennepin County will supply a photo of the MFIP client to use at the MFIP agency for staff ID purposes. To receive a client photo send a copy of the OFP to HC Security. Follow the agency’s workplace violence guidelines for dealing with this situation.

If an MFIP client files an Order For Protection against an agency staff person, transfer that client to WERC. Follow your agency’s HR and workplace violence guidelines for dealing with the staff person.

NOTE: To avoid a conflict of interest, an MFIP client must be transferred to another agency when a relationship (relative or friend) exists between agency staff and the MFIP client.

Section 8.10  HARASSMENT RESTRAINING ORDER (HRO)

There may be an instance when a staff person decides it is necessary to have a Harassment Restraining Order filed against an MFIP client or former client. Complete an Incident Report and send it to HC Security. The staff person should consult with the MFIP agency and the agency’s legal counsel to determine the necessity of an HRO and to receive assistance in the completion of the order.

The MFIP agency may work with the HC Critical Incident Team to receive support and advice. To reach someone on the Critical Incident Team contact Tom Billings at 612-348-5789.
Send a copy of the HRO to HC Security. HC Security will furnish photos for staff recognition purposes and will provide support and advice.

The MFIP agency must review the incident and based on their workplace violence policies and procedures take necessary action. Based on this review, the agency may decide to transfer the MFIP case to WERC.

There may be an instance when an MFIP client decides it is necessary to have a HRO filed against an MFIP staff person. The MFIP agency must review the incident and based on their HR and workplace violence policies and procedures take necessary action. Based on this review, and/or client request, the case may be transferred to WERC.

Section 8.11 VICTIMS OF TORTURE

The following information is from The Center for Victims of Torture. For more information or answers to questions call them at 612-626-1400.

Torture is the deliberate and systematic dismantling of a person’s identity and humanity. It is the attempt to destroy a person’s will to live, and their ability to trust in anyone or anything. The forms of torture include Physical, psychological, deprivation, over-stimulation and pharmacological. The methods of torture are mainly “low-tech”. The most common are beatings and psychological methods.

The long-term physical effects of torture may include headaches, abdominal pains, neuralgic problems, muscle pains, cardiovascular/respiratory problems, foot pains/scars, visual problems, hearing loss, dental pain, genital and/or sexual difficulties. Common psychosocial consequences of torture affecting adjustment and employment include distrust, social isolation, withdrawal, problems with short-term memory, reduced ability to concentrate, impatience, restlessness, anxiety and dissociation. The individual may experience sleeplessness, fatigue, sadness, depressed mood, poor motivation, emotional numbing, irritability, anger/rage, hostility, disruptive behavior and low self-esteem and sensitivity to failure.

Terrorism, torture and war trauma effect five basic human needs: The need to feel safe; the need to trust; the need to feel of value (self-worth); the need to feel close to others; the need to feel some control over our lives.

A refugee/asylum seeker is: a person who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” The difference is that refugees apply and are processed in other countries before reaching the U.S. Asylum seekers apply and are processed in the U.S. after they have entered the country or are at the border.
Article IX. CLIENT SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION TO ACCESS FUNDS

Section 9.01 DOCUMENTATION PRIOR TO AUTHORIZATION

This applies to BOTH the Client Support and the Child Care Fund. When ANY services are authorized by the MFIP agency all of the following must be in the case:

1. The activity must be listed on the Employment Plan. The activity listed on the EP and the Child Care Authorization must match.

2. The EP dates must be current. The service authorized must match or fall within, the dates listed on the EP activity.

3. The official registration and fee statement for the current quarter/semester or activity and the beginning and ending dates of the activity and the number of credits. Verify the client is registered in an activity to justify the request for and use of services.

4. A current personalized class schedule to include the names of each class, the days each class meets, and the beginning and ending times of each class.

Post secondary schools provide computer generated schedules to verify this information. The school registration office may provide the information on signed letterhead.

5. A current financial award letter.

6. Obtain outcomes of the previous activities.

7. Need the actual bill/invoice to pay any expenses, no purchase orders.

Job search logs or the verification used to complete the time tracking form

8. Verification of employment

Section 9.02 DEFINITION OF OUTCOME

Continued MFIP services including client support and Child Care are based on satisfactory progress toward the goals as stated on the EP.
Refer to the DHS manual for documentation required for MFIP activities and how to evaluate the outcome.
Article X. CLIENT SUPPORT ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

The MFIP agency must maintain an accounting trail, which requires no more than a reasonable effort to understand and follow. The agency must track expenditures by client case name or MAXIS case number or social security number. The expenditures must be tracked by the correct payment categories.

Section 10.01 SERVICE DATES

The client MUST be enrolled into the MFIP ES program as a participant before MFIP funds are spent on behalf of the client or reimbursed to the client.

The client must be enrolled on WF1. The date listed on WF1 is considered the enrollment date. There must be a current EP on file.

MFIP WILL NOT PAY FOR ANY OUTSTANDING BILLS A CLIENT INCURRED PRIOR TO MFIP ES ENROLLMENT.

This would include unpaid tuition or book bills at a school the client attended before MFIP ES enrollment. The client is responsible for making arrangements to pay the bill.

If the client is unable to pay the debt, the school may refuse to allow a re-enrollment and alternative training or employment options, such as use of a student loan or other training, will have to be considered.

MFIP WILL NOT PAY FOR ANY OUTSTANDING BILLS FOR SERVICES A CLIENT INCURRED AFTER THE MFIP ES TERMINATION DATE.

The date on WF1 is considered the MFIP ES termination date. If the expense was incurred prior to the MFIP ES termination date, but the bill didn't come until later, the expense can be paid.

Reminder: A bus pass is a prepayment for services provided in the future. The value of those services should not extend beyond the WF1 termination date.

Service dates for:
1. Educational expenses (tuition, books, uniforms, special fees, etc) must be the beginning and the ending dates pertaining to the school term (e.g. Fall term: 9/21/03 to 12/3/03).
2. ACT fee the service date is the month in which the ACT form is filed.
3. Car repair would be the date the work was completed.
Section 10.02 CHECKS

The check should be made out to the business requesting payment whenever possible. For example: the car repair shop, the school, the uniform store, the book store, and the bus company. Checks may be written to reimburse the client if there is a receipt. **MFIP will not advance the client funds for interview clothing or other items.** This is a safeguard for the MFIP agency.

Section 10.03 SECURITY MEASURES

The agency is responsible and accountable for the value of all federal funds received. The agency **MUST** keep bus cards and checks in a locked place.

Many agencies have the client sign for the check as a security measure. Some have a log sheet with the check number, amount of check and the reason for the check. Others have the client sign a photocopy of the check and put that in the case file.

Section 10.04 RECEIPTS/BILLS

A receipt, bill, or invoice for payment should be on the school or company letterhead. The bill must be itemized, dated, and include the dates of service. The bill should not include a previous balance.

The agency check is **NOT** a receipt. It does not indicate what was purchased.

Client support funds may be requested based on an estimate or quote. The check must be made out to the school, business, or service provider.

The actual bill/invoice for completed services must be obtained when the check is exchanged for the services. If the actual bill was less than the check amount the difference must be returned to the MFIP provider.

At times a client will purchase a book from a fellow student. In this case the receipt should be completed by the seller and include the name of the book and the selling price. The seller should sign and date the note including a phone number or address.

**ACT Receipts**

If the check is made out to "ACT", that is proof for the MFIP office at this time. If the check is made out to the client then a receipt is required.
Testing and Application Fees
All other check requests should have a receipt with them. For testing fees, the letter to the client should have the fee amount listed on it. If nothing else is available, copy the letter for the case and highlight the fee. For school entrance deposits, there should be a receipt in the file or at least a copy of the letter to the client requiring the deposit.

Agency Petty Cash and Receipt
Some agencies have petty cash available to them for emergency needs. There should still be a receipt in the file for the service provided. Any time the agency requests reimbursement from the MFIP program for the petty cash expense; there should be a receipt on file for the books, transportation, and clothing.
Article XI. CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES - TRANSPORTATION

Section 11.01 TRANSPORTATION

The MFIP client may be reimbursed for any out of pocket transportation expenses incurred while in the process of fulfilling the goals (job search, education or training, and other activities) specified in an approved EP.

Transportation may be by public transportation or automobile.

The expense must have occurred after the MFIP enrollment date.

The case file must contain a thorough assessment of the client's transportation needs, a plan of how to meet those needs, and the procedures used to determine the client's transportation costs.

For clients in work-study or a paid internship, the transportation expenses may be reimbursed if the work experience is a part of the EP.

(a) Transportation When Employed

In most cases, continue transportation money (bus or mileage) for up to 2 months after the client begins a job that would take them off of public assistance. The rationale is that the client will have the income to pay their own transportation expense after that. If the job is a first step job and will not get them off of public assistance, and there are additional activities in the EP for the client to progress off of public assistance, the agency could continue to provide transportation while the client is working.

Section 11.02 BUS

Bus transportation is issued to the client in advance based on the anticipated level of activity for the month. A monthly bus pass is not an entitlement. The activity level will dictate what the client needs in bus transportation for the month. A monthly bus pass is good for 31 days. Refrain from distributing an additional bus pass until the first has expired.

The agency will keep a bus log. Each bus pass is numbered. The agency will account for each bus pass by number. The client will sign the log sheet next to the number of the bus pass received. Record the date the card was issued on the log sheet. If the client is not
able to come into the office, the agency may write down the client's name on the log sheet and indicate it was mailed out to the client. This is on an exception basis only.

It is the client’s responsibility to replace torn or damaged cards at the MCTO office. MCTO will reissue a card at the value remaining on the damaged card. There is no need for the MFIP agency to replace a card.

(a) **Stored Value Cards and Tokens**

Agencies may purchase and distribute stored value cards and bus tokens when a few days of transportation are needed to complete the activities in the month.

The agency must account for the stored value cards and tokens. Each card is numbered. Keep a log sheet for cards by number and a separate log sheet for tokens. Record the date the cards/tokens are issued and have the client sign the log at receipt.

Log sheets will remain at the MFIP agency and be available for viewing. The names on the log sheets are checked to verify the client was eligible to receive a card for the month.

(b) **Lost Bus Card Policy**

When a client loses a bus card, they may receive stored value cards to complete their required MFIP activities that month. This replacement may be done only ONCE in a calendar year (January to December). Transportation is the client's responsibility for the remainder of the month if another card is lost within the calendar year.

(c) **Lost Bus Card Log**

Keep a Lost Bus Card Log with the bus card folder. When a lost card is replaced with tokens/stored value cards write the client's name on the log.

(d) **Bus Pass for Children to Get to Child Care**

A bus pass may be issued for the children when the client takes the children to the child care provider via the bus. This is to cover the child's expense. Document in the case notes why more than one card is issued to a client.

Transportation is provided for children under 13 years old. Children only receive bus transportation because they need to get to and from the child care provider. The reason they need the child care is because the parents are in an MFIP related activity. Transportation is not provided if the need was still present when the client was not in an MFIP related activity.
(e) **Child Care Van Pick Up**

In some cases child care pick up may be included in the child care rate. In other cases it is billed separately.

Clients who need child care pick up for their children to get to the child care provider can, under some special circumstances, have this paid for by MFIP. This is to be used only when no other reasonable alternative is available and the cost will be affordable for the client when he/she begins work.

The child care pick up must be specified in the case notes and documented in the case file. There should be a pre-determined ending date.

If the client is dependent upon this transportation to get the children to and from child care, it should be considered how he/she would manage after going to work when special transportation funds are no longer available.

(f) **Taxi**

Taxi service will not be authorized as the primary source of transportation. It may be used if there is a situation where the Job Counselor and client find this is the last alternative available.

Taxi and van services are not appropriate as routine transportation.

Section 11.03 DRIVER’S LICENSE

If a driver’s license is needed for the client to obtain or maintain employment, MFIP may assist the client with the cost of driver education.

MFIP may pay endorsement fees to upgrade a license in order for the client to obtain employment.

In the case of a client who lost his/her license, MFIP may pay the reinstatement fees if the client needs the license to obtain or maintain employment. MFIP will NOT cover any penalties or fines associated with the reinstatement.

Section 11.04 DRIVING WITHOUT A LICENSE AND/OR INSURANCE
Minnesota state law requires a valid driver’s license for anyone operating a motor vehicle on the roads. Minnesota state law also requires the motor vehicle (car, truck, motorcycle, etc) to have insurance coverage. Proof of the vehicle insurance coverage MUST be in the vehicle and presented to public safety personnel when requested.

MFIP support service includes mileage reimbursement and auto repairs. There may be legal issues to the MFIP agency if the agency is providing mileage reimbursement or auto repairs to someone who is driving without a license and/or auto insurance.

**Section 11.05 CAR**

The case file must indicate that the client has a valid driver’s license if mileage is to be reimbursed.

MFIP will reimburse the client for mileage to and from activities listed on the MFIP EP. MFIP will reimburse for mileage to drop off and pick up the children at the child care provider. The client will not be reimbursed for trips home between classes except to attend an evening class.

There are two options for mileage reimbursement:

1. To be reimbursed, the client must write down the day, the activity, and the number of miles round trip. The client must sign the declaration.

   The current rate of reimbursement is at $.25 per mile. The agency must show the reimbursement computation on the mileage sheet, examples: 20 miles x 10 days x $.25 = $50.00 or, 10 miles x 4 days x $.25 = $10.00.

   Hennepin County Accounting uses a Hudson Book Street Atlas of Minneapolis and a mileage wheel to determine the correct distance traveled for some of their programs. A strong recommendation is for the agency to have a system in place to verify a mileage claim. Any questionable costs paid to the client will be considered overpayments and subject to reimbursement of funds.

2. The agency may provide a flat weekly or monthly mileage reimbursement comparable in worth to an all-you-can ride bus card with no mileage log required. The client must provide documentation of activities in their plan. If the hours were less, the reimbursement would be adjusted accordingly. The client would sign the activity sheet and indicate that they drove, but would not need to declare actual miles.

   (a) *Unpaid Internships and Mileage*
MFIP funds may be used to reimburse for mileage to and from an unpaid internship site. However, if the client is required to drive as a part of the internship or work experience, the MFIP program will not pay mileage or liability costs. Examples would be an advocate position, which would require driving people around town, or an office support person who may shuttle papers between office sites. The client should seek reimbursement from the internship site for mileage expenses incurred. Encourage the client to check if the internship site will cover any accident liability claims that may come up.

(b) Car Pooling

Clients who car pool can be reimbursed for the cost paid to the driver. There should be a bill or receipt in the case from the driver each month. If the driver is also an MFIP client, passenger payments must be deducted from travel expenses before MFIP payment is made to the driver.

Mileage and Bus in the Same Month

Car problems happen. The agency may issue bus transportation as needed to allow the client to continue with their activities while the car is in repair. The client will not be reimbursed for mileage during the time when the bus transportation was issued.

Write in the case notes what happened and what bus transportation was issued.

Clients who use a "park and ride" will be reimbursed for both the mileage to and from the bus stop and the bus transportation. Case note why both the mileage and bus were paid in the same month.

(c) Parking

MFIP may reimburse the client for parking expenses. The client may or may not have a receipt. The client must write down and sign the mileage form stating the days parking was paid and the amounts paid. Example: Parking during the workshop, $1.50 a day for three days.

The client has the option to park at any lot. However, MFIP will reimburse for the least expensive alternative available. At some schools the parking is less expensive farther out from the school buildings. MFIP will reimburse up to this amount.

Parking at some schools is less expensive if paid by the quarter. The agency MAY pay for this expense in advance.

Note: Some schools will issue the client a parking permit and deduct the cost directly from financial aid. The client may inquire about this option.
(d)  **Car Repair and Upkeep**

Car repair is not a client entitlement. The repair must be essential to the client's ability to complete the EP. For example, while a tire is essential, the additional cost for the lifetime warranty on the tire is NOT essential. A scented pine tree air freshener is not essential to the completion of an EP. All bills/receipts must be itemized. Included under car repair are items including license tabs or insurance.

Hennepin County will allow a maximum of $500 for car upkeep and repair in a calendar year with agency discretion to pay more on a case by case basis. Exceptions would require agency supervisor approval. (A calendar year is from January 1st to December 31st). Some vendors may prefer not to use the maximum for each client depending on the availability of client support funds.

There must be an actual bill/invoice/receipt in the file. A car repair check may be requested from an estimate or invoice from the repair shop. The check must be made out to the business/repair shop. The agency will release the check only when there is an actual bill/receipt.

Evidence of car ownership is required in the case file when car repair funds are requested. It is recommended to obtain a legal description of the vehicle the client is using for transportation, and compare it against the description of the vehicle in the car repair bill.

The insurance company may cover some car repairs, such as windshield replacement. Check before requesting funds.

The MFIP agency must keep track of how much car upkeep/repair money is issued to a client in the calendar year.

(e)  **Car Insurance and License Tabs**

There are some instances when the client may need help with upkeep of the car. Car insurance and license tabs can be paid for under the same guidelines as car repair listed above. This would be included in the same $500 maximum for car repair.

(f)  **Car Payments and Car Lease Payments**

MFIP funds will not be used for car payments or lease payments.
Article XII. CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES - EDUCATION

Section 12.01 EDUCATION

The Job Counselor must conduct an assessment prior to writing an EP that will include educational activities. Educational activities include basic education, GED, ESL, as well as post-secondary programs.

(a) ESL, ABE and GED

Follow the procedures outlined in the State MFIP Employment Services Manual.

(b) Criteria on Training Sites for ABE, ESL, FWL, GED and high school

Effective 10/1/06, Hennepin County Work Supports division has set the following criteria for training sites for participation in the above categories to be included in the EP. This pertains to both DWP and MFIP clients. This policy is now consistent with the rules for approving ESL plans in the Basic Sliding Fee program, and will make it easier for clients to transition to Basic Sliding Fee. It will also guarantee the tests used to measure the proficiency levels and monitor progress are accurate and meet the testing standards of the Minnesota Department of Education.

For ABE, ESL, Functional Work Literacy, GED or high school activities to be part of an EP, the institution providing the training must be approved by the MN Department of Education (DOE) or approved by the MN Department of Human Services through a funding agreement.

The DOE funds a “literacy hotline” database at the Minnesota Literacy Council that has all ABE consortia, their partner providers as well as “unaligned” providers. This database is connected to phone number: 1-800-222-1990. The caller can provide a zip code and the hotline operator is able to tell the caller where the nearest programs are and their operating hours and contact information. Website is: www.themlc.org/hotline/index.htm.

The client may choose to attend or continue attending a program that is not approved by the MN Department of Education. However, it will not be an activity listed on the EP and MFIP support services including child care assistance cannot be approved to support the activity.

DOE approves small grants to non-profit agencies who respond to a request for proposal. Many non-profits are affiliated with a school district within a consortium. For example:
Minneapolis School District classes are provided at several satellite locations such as the Lehman Center and the Sabathani Center.

(c) **Online High School Diplomas**

The MN Department of Education works with public schools and they don’t have the authority to say what is acceptable outside the public sector. They don’t have the resources to check out the thousands of claims made on the web. No one regulates on-line learning programs, unless it is a public on-line learning program that is accredited in Minnesota by the DOE. Many of the web sites make unrealistic claims such as completing 24 credits in 3 months.

If an 18-19 year old received an on-line diploma (from somewhere other than a program approved by the DOE) it will be difficult, if not impossible, to determine the legitimacy of the diploma, so explain the MFIP policy and place the teen in the “work option.” If the teen is under 18 years of age, refer them to the school district for a determination. Each district has a transfer specialist who will sort this out, and probably do testing.

Section 12.02 POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The State MFIP Employment Services Manual outlines the approach to take when looking into post-secondary training options for the MFIP participant.

Section 12.03 POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING-HC/CITY OF MPLS POLICY

A number of MFIP employment service providers are also educational institutions or providers of customized training. This situation lead to a couple of instances of possible conflict of interest. This policy is intended to address those conflicts and create some guidelines for use and funding of training.

(a) **When it is appropriate for an ESP to enroll their MFIP participant(s) in their education program(s):**

There is no blanket prohibition against an MFIP client enrolling in an education/training program offered by a school associated with their ESP. However, it is NOT OK for an ESP to use their own MFIP clients to fill the organization's training slots. All EPs must be based on an assessment that indicates the need for, and appropriateness of, the particular training. These plans must meet the criteria set out by the State for approval of post-secondary programs. Clients, for whom post-secondary education is found appropriate, must be informed of other training options. The client file must contain documentation
that the client did the comprehensive vocational research prior to selecting the particular school and that this is a mutually agreed upon plan.

(b) **When MFIP funds may be used to pay these education expenses:**

Educational expenses, including application fees, tuition, books, supplies, uniforms, tools, etc., which are required for participating in an education or training program may be paid with MFIP funds. However, MFIP funds may only be used to cover those education expenses for which no other funds are available. Training programs funded by other grants including MFIP special projects, Welfare-to-Work, and WISE, may not be paid for with additional MFIP funds. These grant funded training programs do not meet the definition of having educational expenses for which no other funds are available. Costs for non-grant-funded training cannot differ from those charged to the public in general and should be a part of any literature provided to clients and referring counselors prior to approval of the EP. Generally, MFIP training funds should be used for the least costly alternative.

Section 12.04 FINANCIAL AWARD INFORMATION

The client must apply for and accept all financial aid available. The client must apply in a timely manner to take advantage of all financial aid available. Students who apply as soon after January 1st as possible improve their chances of receiving aid because some funds are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

All financial aid must be applied to the educational expenses before MFIP funds are accessed. Financial aid would include: all state and federal grants and scholarships, all school scholarships and gifts, tribal funds designated for educational purposes, DRS funds, and veteran benefits designated for education.

The total financial aid awarded depends on the needs of the client, the school index number, and the money available to the school.

(a) **How MFIP and Food Support Count Financial Aid**

The client must report any financial aid received to their HSR and ESP. All financial aid is excluded as income for MFIP grant calculation purposes. This includes all types of work-study.

Federal work-study is excluded for Food Support purposes, but has to be verified. State work-study income is counted as earned income for Food Support purposes.
Food Support may count student loans as income. Students must report all financial aid received to their MFIP worker for determination.

(b) **Charges Against Financial Aid**

Some schools will not allow a student to register and attend classes until the financial aid is awarded. This may mean the client has to wait another quarter before attending school. MFIP will not pay educational expenses, including tuition, for a client who is awaiting financial aid.

(c) **Financial Aid Ineligibility**

The financial aid eligibility limit is defined by federal regulations as all credits attempted. Included in this measurement are zero credit equivalency courses and grades of "W", "T", "F", and "N". After the credit limit is reached, the remaining financial aid awarded for the year is canceled.

Section 12.05 STUDENT LOANS

Student loans are difficult to pay back when the student does become employed. A student who drops out of school without completing the training must pay back the loan, or at least make a number of installments before any further financial aid can be awarded.

The MFIP policy is to discourage the student from applying for, and accepting any form of financial aid that would require eventual repayment.

However, if the student chooses to accept a student loan as part of the financial aid package, the entire package, including the loan, is considered available to cover educational costs. MFIP funds will not be used to cover educational costs until the entire student aid package has been used for required educational expenses.

The educational costs, which are necessary to complete the educational goals in the EP, must be listed in the EP, and, they may include expenditures that MFIP funding will not pay. For instance, the client and the Job Counselor may agree that an automobile is necessary to provide transportation to child care and to school. There may be children in the home who are not technically eligible for the Child Care Fund, but for whom child care must be provided if the parent is to attend school. If the loan portion of the financial package is to be used for these or similar costs the client and the Job Counselor must agree that this is a necessary educational cost, and this should be specified in the MFIP EP.
If, after all educational costs have been paid, some financial aid funds are remaining, their use is at the client's discretion. This may occur whether the financial aid package contained a loan or only grant sources. However, remember that the aid package is intended to cover an academic YEAR. An excess of funds in the first quarter/semester may be needed to cover costs in the second or third quarter/semester.

There may be specific circumstances where the client must apply for student loan money to use toward the educational expenses. For example, the client may decide to attend an expensive school when a less expensive alternative was available. MFIP would not pay the expense. This agreement must be clearly written in the client's EP.

Section 12.06 DEFAULTED STUDENT LOAN

Inform each client of the complications of a defaulted student loan. The discussion on loans and financial aid should take place before the client applies for enrollment into a school. This may help prepare the client for some of the recruitment tactics used by some schools.

A defaulted student loan can affect the defaulted borrower in many ways. Some of them are listed below:

1. No federal or state grants to help pay for school while in default
2. Damaged credit rating (at least 7 years on a credit report)
3. No federal jobs as long as the loan is in default
4. No federally insured mortgage for a home
5. 100% of the income tax refunds will be taken by the government to pay on the default loan until it is paid off. The student is still considered in default, even when it is paid off if no voluntary payments are made. Tax returns taken by the government are not considered voluntary payments.
6. Garnishment of wages

According to research one characteristic of a defaulted borrower is to have attended one year or less of schooling. Most students who drop out of a training program do so within the first year. If the student completes the first year, chances are they will complete the rest of the training program. If the student will wait until after the first year of training to accept a loan there may be less chance of a defaulted loan later.

Section 12.07 EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES
Educational expenses that are not otherwise covered may be provided through the MFIP program. This includes tuition, books, supplies, and tools of the trade required in training. MFIP will not pay for items recommended or an enhancement to the training.

Some Job Counselors and schools use the term "exhausted" to mean the client has no other aid available regardless of where it was spent. For MFIP purposes, the only Financial Aid which is "exhausted" is that which was spent for strictly educational purposes (tuition, required books and supplies). This must be carefully documented for the entire year.

Items such as clothing, food, and cosmetics are NOT considered "allowable educational costs" for MFIP purposes. Many bookstores carry these items and will allow the client to charge them. For this reason, the bills MUST be itemized to verify the charges are required items and are allowable deductions from the financial aid.

Federal law prohibits the use of MFIP funds to pay for services or activities for which other funds are available. Hennepin County MFIP will not pay for any educational expenses incurred by the client until all financial aid has been used first against the educational expenses.

Section 12.08 ALLOWABLE MFIP CLIENT SUPPORT FUNDS FOR EDUCATION

1. Remedial or preparatory courses needed to enter education or training, such as: Literacy, ESL, basic skills, testing for required course work waivers.

2. Accredited education or training programs when the recipient has been denied sufficient funding from other sources (this must be verified in writing from the school) such as the State's Scholarship and Grants Program.

3. Training programs that are less than 10 weeks (these programs are not eligible for funding through the State Scholarship and Grants Program). Example: CNA

4. Fixed education or training participation expenses, including application fees, student fees, books, lab fees, special equipment, uniforms, and other expenses related to program participation. This would include testing and fees to obtain the license needed to work in a particular profession, such as CNA, LPN, Cosmetology, or Social Work.

   (a) Least Expensive Alternative

The least expensive program of the type agreed upon by the Job Counselor and the client will be approved. The definition of least expensive program is not as simple as private vs. public education. Tuition costs at one school may be higher but, with a generous aid
package available, would be less expensive than at another school. Or, one school might have higher tuition costs, but the training may be completed in a shorter time frame.

If the client selects a more expensive program, MFIP will cover costs only to the same extent that would have been necessary under the least expensive rule.

(b) **School Supplies and other Items**

REMINDER: All financial aid available MUST be used first toward the required educational costs, including the items listed below.

REMINDER: MFIP money may not be used to purchase equipment such as computers, cameras, tripods, and tape recorders.

Unfortunately, some clients may not complete their educational goals. If the MFIP agency has paid for any big item supplies like auto mechanic tools, they must require the client to return the items. The returned items would be available for other MFIP clients to use. A preferable alternative for the client and the agency is to rent, rather than purchase, such equipment.

**Tools:** Client file should contain a statement from the instructor or school indicating what is required for the training and the estimate of the costs. Some of the tool sheets given by the instructors show two or three alternatives for the client to purchase; this does not mean the client must purchase all of them. (An example would be toolboxes.)

**Portfolios:** $125 maximum per class (includes books and all supplies) based on information from several schools. Most portfolios required for a class are the accumulation of all the work done for the quarter. The instructors don't require a greater effort or expense. Instructors stated that the cost of supplies for a class with books would be about $100.

For job search portfolios the MFIP agency should establish a maximum amount with the client. This portfolio will generally include work accumulated in the course of training and additional expense should be minimal.

**Book Bag:** The MFIP agency may assist the client with the purchase of ONE book bag while in the MFIP program. This is not an entitlement. The maximum is $50.00.

**Supplies:** Students generally need about $25.00 worth of supplies each quarter. MFIP will pay up to $25.00 a quarter for supplies needed for the training program. An agency statement explaining the need must accompany any requests that exceed $25.00.

Supplies include paper, pencils, and pens, index cards, highlighters, paper clips, rulers.
Section 12.09 SCHOOL BILLING

The school may bill on a monthly, quarterly or semester basis. The MFIP agency will not pay for the entire program in advance.

School billing requires an itemized statement indicating which items were paid from the award and which are still outstanding.

At the time a bill is submitted for payment, the case file will have at least two financial award letters in the case: the original award letter for the year and an updated/current one which documents the actual monies awarded. Compare the award letters because the award amounts may change during the year.

Submit a bill for payment after the school has applied all award money intended for the service time frame toward the expenses. When a school receives or distributes the financial aid late in the quarter/semester, or into the next quarter/semester, it must apply the aid to expenses for the time frame it was intended to cover. For example: if the award monies for Fall 03 are distributed during the middle of the winter quarter, they must be applied to any outstanding Fall 03 expenses.

The school should not distribute any excess award money to the student/client until it is sure all expenses are paid. However, if the school distributes the funds to the student/client, rather than apply them to the expenses, MFIP will not pay the expenses. MFIP will pay for those documented expenses that would have been over the award money distributed. For example: The documented educational expenses for Fall 03 totaled $800. The financial award totaled $700. MFIP would pay the $100 difference.

There is no dollar limit on the educational expenses MFIP will pay for a client. However, ALL financial aid available to the client, including student loans, must be applied to the expenses first.

The MFIP client must keep accurate records and receipts.

If the client has withdrawn or not completed the class, and this has not been approved in advance by the Job Counselor, the client is responsible for the cost.

Job Counselors must compare the final grades/progress reports against the class registrations and proceed accordingly.

Section 12.10 SCHOOL WITHDRAWALS AND INCOMPLETES
The school receives financial benefit from each student it shows as officially registered. A student who merely stops attending class during the quarter is still considered to be registered as a student. Deciding to no longer attend class is NOT the same as officially withdrawing from the class.

Each school has a financial aid disbursement policy and a policy regarding withdrawal deadlines. The school provides this information to the student. The student is expected to follow the policies.

The MFIP client must officially withdraw from the class and furnish verification of the withdrawal to the Job Counselor.

When a client withdraws from a class it may delay the completion of the training goal. For personal reasons the client may want to withdraw from a class or quarter/semester of school. The client must work with the Job Counselor to explore the available alternatives. Based on the client's circumstance the Job Counselor may decide the withdrawal is the best alternative.

Whenever a client withdraws within the quarter/semester, the school holds them financially accountable. The MFIP Program will hold the client financially accountable if the withdrawal was not approved in advance by the Job Counselor.

1. The client who withdraws without the Job Counselor's knowledge and approval is responsible for the bill.

2. The client who drops or withdraws from a class or school without following the school policy is responsible for the bill.

3. The client who withdrew from school prior to the disbursement of the financial aid is responsible for the bill. Rules prohibit the school from applying the aid to tuition costs of a student no longer enrolled.

4. The client who withdrew from school AFTER the withdrawal deadline is not entitled to a pro-rated tuition rate. The client is responsible for this bill if financial aid is not available due to the withdrawal deadline.

IF the withdrawal was due to a true emergency or factors beyond the client’s control an exception may be made.

Either the client or the Job Counselor should check with the school to see if the reason for the withdrawal is sufficient to allow a refund or the tuition forgiven.

When a client withdraws from a class the books and supplies should be returned to the bookstore for a refund. MFIP will not pay for the same book twice.
(Child care reminder: Immediately re-determine the amount of child care needed to complete the training period and inform Child Care Assistance Worker.)

**FOR INCOMPLETES:** The Job Counselor must follow up with the client on the reason for the incomplete and what steps they will take to complete the class. The Job Counselor must decide what actions to take if the client decides not to complete the class. When the class is completed the grade should be in the case. MFIP may not pay to retake the class.

**CNA:** Twice is the maximum number of times MFIP funds may be used to pay for a CNA class. The agency must justify the reason for the second attempt and the payment.

**Section 12.11** **INELIGIBLE FOR FINANCIAL AID BECAUSE OF ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Federal regulations require all supportive services, client support and child care funds continue ONLY if the client is making satisfactory progress. It is necessary to document in the case file any extenuating circumstances which may warrant payment of continued services although the client has not made satisfactory progress.

A student whose grade point average falls below the requirements for that particular school is placed on academic probation with the school. This means the student may or may not be eligible for financial aid until the grade point average is brought up in the next one or two quarters/semesters.

The student is sent a letter from the school and given the opportunity to appeal the decision. The Job Counselor should assist the client in this appeal process if there is good cause for the bad grades.

If the probation stands, the agency may want to pay for tuition and books the next quarter/semester.

When the probation is lifted, the client is required to apply for and use all financial aid available.
Section 13.01 Child Care Assistance for MFIP/DWP Participants:

There are several different Child Care Assistance programs with different eligibility criteria. Families working with Employment Service Providers are on either MFIP or DWP. The MFIP/DWP child care programs are fully funded. *This means that all eligible families are served.*

It's important that Employment Counselors work with clients and submit the initial child care application and supporting forms at the point they are first aware that Child Care Assistance is needed to support the activities approved and verified in their MFIP or DWP Employment Plan. Child Care Assistance is allowed for employment and activities necessary for the family to prepare for, seek, and retain employment. Eligible families can continue to receive child care if they continue to participate in the activities approved in their MFIP or DWP Employment Plan. The Employment Counselor is the main contact for the ESP clients. Child Care Assistance is a support service available to assist families to meet their MFIP or DWP program employment goals. All communication regarding child care needs, activities allowed, changes in the amount of service, etc. comes from the ESP Employment Counselor based on their ongoing work with the client.

**(a) How do families assigned to an ESP access Child Care Assistance?**

- All families receiving MFIP or DWP with an approved Employment Plan are eligible for Child Care Assistance to prepare for, seek and retain employment as outlines in the plan.
- Employment Counselors work with the families to complete the initial Child Care Assistance application and required supporting form. Forms needed are posted on the DWP & MFIP Employment Service site.
- Forms must be completed and signed by all parents in the household.
- Employment Counselors will be notified by the Child Care Worker of all incomplete information.

**(b) How do applications get to Child Care Assistance?**

- Mail all initial Child Care Assistance Applications and supporting forms to Child Care Assistance at:

  Hennepin County- HSPHD
  Child Care Assistance – MC 718
  300 South Sixth Street
  Minneapolis, MN  55487-0718
• Please do NOT fax Child Care Assistance applications.

• Employment Service Providers can get a supply of Child Care Assistance application packets by emailing: HSPH.Brookdale.OS/Hennepin.us

They should include the following in the body of the email: name of the agency, contact person, address, and number of packets needed.

All forms included in the application packet can also be found of the MFIP and DWP Employment Services site.

• A complete Child Care Plan with information regarding the activity, child care provider, and the amount of care recommended **MUST be mailed with the initial Child Care Assistance application** – do NOT submit the Child Care Plan through a separate mailing, fax or ECF download.

• Refer to the ESP Child Care Application checklist to determine documents that must be submitted with the initial Child Care Assistance application. The checklist is posted on the DWP & MFIP Employment Service site.

### ESP Checklist for Child Care Application – MFIP/DWP

*This checklist outlines documents that must be submitted with the initial MFIP/DWP Child Care Assistance application. All activities must be verified prior to submitting the application. Recommendations for child care are submitted via the Child Care Plan. Care should only be recommended based on the time the parents are in their approved activities and therefore unable to care for their children. The child care provider’s hours of operation and any school age children’s school schedule must also be taken into consideration when recommending child care. All forms are listed on the MFIP & DWP Employment Services website.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents that must be completed</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Child Care Assistance Application**  
  - Required for all Child Care Assistance requests. | DHS 3550 \(\checkmark\) N N |
| **Child Care Plan – Completed by Employment Counselor.**  
  - Required with all Child Care Assistance requests. | HC 12362A \(\checkmark\) N |
| **Notice of Privacy Practices**  
  - Required with all Child Care Assistance requests. | HC 383 \(\checkmark\) N |
| **Information Disclosure Non-EPIC HSPHD Clients**  
  - Required with all Child Care Assistance requests. | HCLC1003 \(\checkmark\) N |
| **Parent Acknowledgement**  
  - Needed when a Legal Nonlicensed child care provider chosen. | DHS 5367 \(\checkmark\) N N N/A |
| **Notice of Release**  
  - Required with all Child Care Assistance applications when the client is using a Family Licensed child care provider. | CF 1017 \(\checkmark\) N N N/A |
| **Referral to Support & Collections:**  
  - Form must be completed for each absent parent if not on file. | DHS 3163B \(\checkmark\) N N |
| **Cooperation with Child Support/Statement of** | DHS 2338 \(\checkmark\) N |


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Cause:</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Form must be completed for each absent parent if not on file.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Income Verification</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Verification:</td>
<td>CF 1042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Schedule, income, and FEIN must be verified for each job.</td>
<td>☐ Y ☐ N ☐ N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must have verified work schedule. If schedule varies, must verify schedule from last 30 days to get an average of days/hours worked per week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must have most recent 30 days of pay stubs for existing jobs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For new jobs, must submit pay stubs for first 30 days of employment within the first month.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For self-employment, must have all income &amp; expenses plus an approved Business Plan. Previous year tax forms must be verified. Self-employment work schedule must be documented.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Verification:</th>
<th>☐ Y ☐ N ☐ N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• School must be approved in MFIP employment plan. Class schedule, tuition costs, financial aid and grades must be verified for current school period.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Support Services (including job search):</th>
<th>☐ Y ☐ N ☐ N/A</th>
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<tr>
<td>• All activities included in the MFIP/DWP employment plan must be verified and monitored. Actual documentation must be available upon request.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Exception:</strong> Medical documentation is needed about condition, duration, inability to care for children, &amp; inability to work.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Recommending Child Care</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification:</td>
<td>☐ Y ☐ N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• View ECF to ensure identification exists for all household members before recommending child care.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residency:</th>
<th>DHS 2852 or other proof</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• View ECF for address proof before recommending care.</td>
<td>☐ Y ☐ N</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents with School Age Children:</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Name of school with start &amp; end times; must be verified for each school age child; add this information to the CCA Plan.</td>
<td>☐ Y ☐ N ☐ N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check school website to verify child’s school hours.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared Custody Schedule:</th>
<th>☐ Y ☐ N ☐ N/A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Signed statement from parents with days &amp; hours each parent has children or child support court order with same details.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(c) **How do Employment Counselors recommend Child Care Assistance?**

The Child Care Plan is a tool use to recommend Child Care Assistance, report changes, and end Child Care Assistance. The Child Care Plan is posted on the DWP & MFIP Employment Service site along with directions on how to complete it.

(d) **How do Employment Counselors determine status of Child Care Assistance case?**

- Employment Counselors have access to MEC2 and ECF. If you have questions regarding access please notify your supervisor or consult the computer access information on the DWP & MFIP Employment Services site.
- Employment Counselors can view MEC2 to determine if the Child Care application has been processed, the current status, whether a child care provider is registered in Hennepin County, current co-pays, amount of service authorized, current activities.
- Workers can view ECF to determine if paperwork has been received, whether it's complete, and to determine if further changes/etc need to be communicated.

(e) **Who answers questions about Child Care Assistance?**

- The Employment Counselor is the main child care contact person for MFIP/DWP clients receiving Child Care Assistance. If there is a question on how to proceed with child care, the Employment Counselor can contact the Child Care Worker assigned to their agency to determine the correct approach.
- Child Care is based on the recommendation from the Employment Counselor. Allowed activities are verified and monitored by the Employment Counselor. Child Care staff will be referring clients back to Employment Counselors for assistance when they have question regarding what is recommend by the Employment Counselor. This is due to child care being tried to the MFIP/DWP Employment Plan.
- Child Care Providers can call Child Care workers directly to verify a current authorization. Employment Counselors can NOT guarantee child care service and must refer the caller to the child care worker. Before doing so, confirm on MEC2 & ECF that all necessary paperwork has been submitted and that the correct child care provider is listed.
- DHS provides Child Care Assistance training in conjunction with ESP New Worker training. For ongoing technical assistance, Employment Counselors can contact the Child Care Worker assigned to their agency.

(f) **How do I handle Child Care during an ES sanction?**

- MFIP clients can receive child care while under a MFIP sanction for activities in the Employment Plan that they are complying with. They can also continue to receive child care to get back into compliance. Employment Counselors can use the Child Care Plan to recommend any changes in the amount of care. They can also use the child care plan to end child care if that is what is needed.
• DWP sanctions are imposed when participants do not cooperate with employment services. Unlike MFIP, DWP sanctions result in total ineligibility for DWP and child care. When there is a DWP sanction DWP and child care ends.
• Activities should be monitored closely by the Employment Counselor during a cure sanction period and Child Care Assistance should be notified via the Child Care Plan of any changes needed to the Child Care Assistance case.
• Sanctions due to non-cooperation with Child Support or Fraud will result in the Child Care Assistance case closing.

Section 13.02 CLIENT SUPPORT FUNDS FOR CHILD CARE

In ALL instances where the client would be eligible to receive child care through the Child Care Fund that must be used as the source of child care payments. That means a client enrolled in an educational program, an internship, a job, or any steady activity must use the County Child Care Fund, not Client Support funds.

The client support funds are not used to pay the parent fees or co-payment portion of the child care bill or for payments over the county’s maximum amount. They are not used to pay for added provider fees such as field trips and meals.

If there is an extra special desperate need (e.g. the only day this quarter that State Board Examinations are given), the Job Counselor may make an exception. The agency may cover sick child care if it is not covered by the county’s child care fund and it is needed for the client to obtain or maintain employment. MFIP may cover alternate child care when the primary provider is closed for vacation if it is not covered by the county’s child care fund and it is needed to obtain or maintain employment. This should NOT be done on a routine basis.

The above policy must also be followed for child care provided during MFIP agency meetings where on-site child care is provided. This would include the job club groups; self-esteem workshops, and support groups.

To be complete the bill should include the following:
• It should be completed by the child care provider and signed by the child care provider.
• State the time frame (days and hours) the bill is intended to cover. MFIP will not pay for services in advance.
• The bill should be itemized for each child. Show the computation. For example: One child at $2.00 per hour for 8 hours = $16.00.

(a) Extra Child Care Provider Fees
• Some child care providers charge an extra fee for certain activities (field trips, storytelling, art supplies, parties) held at the Center. The client should make arrangements to pay if they wish their child to participate in the activities. MFIP and Child Care regulations consider this an unallowable expense.

• MFIP will not pay for any costs charged over the county’s maximum rate.

• MFIP will not pay the tuition for summer camps for older kids.

Section 13.03 HOUSING

MFIP client support funds may be used to pay for the following when a family is facing a housing crisis:
• A security deposit as well as first and last month’s rent to assist a family in obtaining new housing.
• A month’s rent or mortgage payment when a change in family circumstance creates a crisis situation.

Below are the guidelines on when MFIP client support funds could be used for housing costs. ALL of the following guidelines must be met.

• This is an emergency that affects the person’s ability to get and/or keep a job. This means the client has a verified job offer or they are already employed. It does not mean they are in job search or other training activities.
• Emergency Assistance is not available.
• It is on a one-time basis. Once in a lifetime.
• All other resources were explored and none were available.
• The housing costs will be affordable in the future.
• The issue would be resolved.
• The agency ESP supervisor has approved the funding.

Documentation for ALL of the above is required to be in the case file prior to making a payment.

For clients in sanction, Emergency Assistance cannot be used for rent and utilities if the inability to pay was the result of the sanction or disqualification from MFIP. The State didn’t think this means that providers could never cover rent for a family in sanction, because it may not be clear whether the sanction caused the problem. The agency must address this in the case file.

Inform the HSR when MFIP client support funds are used for housing assistance.
Coordinate with the Shelter Unit when client support funds are used for housing. The number is 612-348-9410. Inform the Human Services Representative when client support funds are used for housing.

(a) **DHS Emergency Criteria**

To qualify as an emergency all three criteria must be true:
1. There is a qualifying emergency episode
2. The emergency is expected to be resolved within 4 months
3. The emergency is not expected to recur.

Thus, it is expected that rent/mortgage payments would never be more than 4 months and in general you should be guided by the City/County policy of limiting payment to either:
- Security deposit plus first and last month’s rent to assist in obtaining new housing, or
- A month’s rent or mortgage payment.

**Section 13.04 RENTAL APPLICATION FEES**

Many landlords require prospective tenants to pay an application fee. If required, the fee is used to cover the cost of checking the tenant’s references. Prospective tenants should ask if an application fee is required and, if so, the amount of the fee. They should also ask if application fees are refundable and request a receipt for payment. Landlords can’t take screening fees from prospective tenants when there are no rental units available.

If the client doesn’t have an unlawful detainer, they may consider paying for one application fee. The client is entitled to know what tenant screening agency the landlord used and they can ask the landlord for a copy of the report. If the landlord does not provide the report, the client can go to the screening agency and obtain a copy for $3.00. The client could possibly use the copy of the tenant report with other potential landlords to avoid additional application fees.

Some shelters may help the client with one application fee if they do not have an unlawful detainer.

MFIP client support funds may be used for one application fee ONLY if the client doesn’t have an unlawful detainer.

If the client does have an unlawful detainer, they are better off not seeking to rent where there are application fees because they will probably be turned down. Most apartment buildings use a screening agency. The client would get better results (and save money in application fees) by looking in the community where they want to live and dealing with smaller units such as duplexes.
RENTAL RESOURCES

City of Minneapolis Housing Services Phone 612-673-3003. This agency helps renters who have questions or problems about their renting situation. They are a referral service on housing-related matters for the City of Minneapolis. They can help with renter’s rights, court preparation, a notice to vacate, etc. The agency is available to come out and speak to groups of Job Counselors and clients on housing issues as well as work with specific client issues. Contact them directly.

Home Line, which handles the suburbs and staffed by attorneys, located at 34th and Bloomington. Phone: 612-728-5767

Section 13.05 UTILITIES

There may be instances when assistance with utilities might be appropriate. Use ALL the same guidelines as listed in Housing above. Documentation must be in the case file prior to payment.

MFIP can pay for telephone installation or a one month payment to prevent a disconnection. Client support would be available to cover only the basic service and there would be a cap on assistance at $100.00. It will not pay long distance charges, and for charges such as 1-900 numbers, add on services like call waiting, etc..

Section 13.06 EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER EXPENSES

(a) Expenses Necessary to Find a Job

$150 maximum per calendar year

This is not an automatic entitlement for the client. The need for the expenses must be verified in the file. The MFIP program provides job search expenses. Job search expenses include interview clothing, resume preparation and printing, stamps, and sometimes portfolios. The expense must be necessary to the job search. In some cases, personal hygiene items may be needed to help the client get a job. The laundry or dry cleaning of existing clothing may allow the client to interview for jobs.
(b) **Expenses Necessary to Accept a Job**

**$350 maximum per calendar year**

Items required by the job or necessary to accept the job and not provided by the employer, include: safety equipment, uniforms, special clothing, and hand tools. It may include work clothing over and above the job search clothing for those in an office setting, if needed.

(c) **Incentives**

Federal law prohibits the use of TANF funds for gifts, however, incentives are allowed. Incentives may be used to form or reinforce a behavior. The behavior should be a benchmark in the client’s progress toward self-sufficiency. For instance when they pass their GED, when they are hired, or when they have retained their job for a certain length of time. Attending Overview is not considered a benchmark.

Incentives should be available to all agency clients. The agency will set the benchmark behaviors that will be rewarded within their agency. The agency may even want to inform their clients in advance to stimulate the desired behavior response. Incentives are not meant to provide for the client’s basic needs such as food, shelter and utilities. The TANF grant is meant to meet the client’s basic needs. Certificates to grocery stores would be considered providing for basic needs and should not be used as incentives.

The incentive **should not exceed $25** per benchmark. In the course of becoming self-sufficient, the client may receive incentives for reaching several benchmarks. Incentives are not intended to replace Client Support dollars for other allowable items such as expenses to find or accept a job, or to resolve a shelter crisis under existing policy.

(d) **Green Cards**

The HC Office of Multi-Cultural Services (OMS) will provide free assistance to any Hennepin County resident who needs help with the process of renewing a green card. If someone is on public assistance there may be a fee waiver. The renewal takes about 90 days.

Please note that the card may expire but status does not. In other words, they don’t need to have a current green card to have valid/current status in the U.S. They would not be deported if the card expires unless they have committed a deportable offense.

In the long run, obtaining U.S. citizenship maybe better for the MFIP client, but it is not necessary to become self-sufficient and off of MFIP. The OMS also helps with the citizenship paperwork. There may be a fee waiver with this for people on public assistance.
Section 13.07 UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Refer to the DHS manual for more examples of unallowable expenses.

(a) **MEDICAL Services**

MFIP client support money will not be used for items covered under the Medicaid program. This includes eye glasses, teeth, hearing aids, weight loss programs, and psychological counseling. If there is a problem obtaining these services have the client call the patient representative at their managed care provider. They may also call the Managed Health Care Unit at 612-596-7258 to speak with an advocate.

MFIP clients may be charged a co-payment for office visits. This may occur for CD/MI assessments and other visits in support of the MFIP EP or to obtain an extension. Since the co-payment is part of the cost for a medical service, TANF funds are not allowed to pay this expense.

(b) **Payments for Testing**

Testing to determine developmental learning problems, behavioral problems, or diagnostic testing may be covered under Medicaid. Mental Health counseling is covered by Medicaid.

Several Health Plans have contracted with Hennepin County to provide the MFIP client with services mandated under Medicaid. The Health Plan providers have procedures the client must follow to access the services. The Health Plans will require the client use the services provided within the plan.

The client must first access services provided through Medicaid and their Health Plan. MFIP client support funds can be used to pay for a limited amount of counseling (for example, a couple of sessions at Learning Disabilities Association) if it is determined the Health Plan will not cover it. The client support funds should be a supplement to the Medicaid Program, not the primary source of counseling money.

Call the Managed Health Care Unit at 612-596-7258 to find out which Health Plan the client was assigned. Anyone answering the phone will be able to help.

(c) **Clothing for Children**

MFIP support services are not to be used to purchase children’s clothing.
(d) *No Show Charges*

The client is responsible to repay MFIP for instances in which the client failed to show up for a scheduled appointment that had been requested by the MFIP agency, and a NO SHOW FEE was charged. This would be for appointments such as for psychological testing and evaluation. Inform the client of the importance of attending scheduled appointments.
Article XIV. **OTHER MFIP ITEMS**

Section 14.01 MFIP AND MEDICAL CARE

Medical Assistance is no longer attached to MFIP. A client may be eligible for MFIP cash assistance but not meet the guidelines for Medical Assistance. The medical eligibility is determined every month for each member in the MFIP household. It is possible that an MFIP client could bounce on and off medical eligibility while their children remain eligible for medical assistance the entire time. If the MFIP client does not meet the guidelines for medical assistance they may qualify for other medical programs such as Minnesota Care.

When a client is eligible for medical care they are asked to choose a Managed Health Care Plan and to use that plan for all of their medical needs. They can request a change in the provider only once a year.

Clients with questions about their medical coverage should contact their health care provider. Or, they can contact the HC Managed Health Care Unit at 612-596-8860. This unit will advocate on the client’s behalf with the HMO.

(a) **Hennepin County Managed Care Advocates**

The managed care advocates are an available resource for participants on public assistance. The advocates are able to work with the managed care providers and their patients to obtain the services outlined in the plan. The Managed Care Advocates phone number is 612-596-8860. The email address is: hsp.mhc.advocates@co.hennepin.mn.us.

(b) **Medical Terms**

The following definitions are provided to help explain the terms used in Medical Assistance.

- Capitation: A per-person monthly payment for health services paid to a health plan 6 days before the end of the month.
- Department of Human Services (DHS): aka the State
- Eligibility Verification System (EVS): A system that links providers, by telephone, with the MMIS system eligibility file.
- Fee For Service (FFS): The provider bills the State for each medical service provided.
- General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC): A State-funded program for persons in need of medical care who are not eligible for other state and federal programs.
- Health Maintenance Organization (HMO): A managed health care organization certified and monitored by the Minnesota Department of Health.
Health Plan: An organization contracting with DHS to provide health services to PMHCP enrollees for a monthly capitation payment.

Health Plan Enrollment Card: A card showing the plan identification number, which is mailed by the health plan to enrollees in that plan.

MA, Medicaid… aka Medical Assistance: A federally-funded program established under Title XIX of SSA to provide necessary medical care to low-income persons.

Managed Care: A coordinated health care delivery system that includes pre-established provider networks.

Managed Care Appeal: An appeal filed by the enrollee against a plan for denial, termination or reduction of health services. The MHC Advocate writes the appeal and attends the appeal with and on behalf of the client.

Managed Care enrollment cut-off date: The date information must be entered on MMIS for health plan coverage to be effective the following month.

Managed Care reinstatement cut-off date: The date re-enrollment information must be entered on MMIS for health plan coverage to be effective the following month (the last business day of the month).

Medicare: A federal health insurance program available to most people over age 65 and certain disabled person.

Minnesota Health Care Program: Refers to Medical Assistance, General Assistance Medical Care and MinnesotaCare.

MinnesotaCare (MnCare): A subsidized health program for low-income persons (premiums, based on income).

Person Master Index (PMI): An 8 digit number assigned to a person eligible for MHCP. The number is used by all programs for billing DHS for persons on Fee For Service.

PGAMC: Prepaid managed health care for General Assistance Medical Care recipients.

PMAP: Prepaid managed health care for Medical Assistance recipients.

PMCRE: Managed health care program for Minnesota Care recipients.

Premium: A monthly payment made by, or on behalf of, a person to purchase private insurance (OHC).

Prepaid Minnesota Health Care Programs (PMHCP): Comprised of MCRE, PMAP and PGMACP.

Retirement Survivor Disability Income (RSDI): A federal program which pays monthly income to retirees, survivors or disabled persons who have paid into the fund from employment earnings.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): A federal program that provides minimum income for persons who are blind or disabled and who do not have enough RSDI work quarters. The program is administered through the SA but the payments do not come out of the RSDI Fund.

Third Party Liability (TPL) aka Other Health Care (OHC): Private health insurance through an individual or group policy usually through an employer.
Section 14.02 CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (IV-D)

Child support is money parents who do not live with their dependent children are court-ordered to pay for their support. This program helps children receive financial, child care and medical support. It helps parents establish a financial partnership in support of their children.

Who can apply? The parent of a minor child or the person who has court-ordered custody of a minor child can apply for IV-D services and the child is financially dependent on that person, and one or both of the child’s parents are absent from the home.

Every MFIP client is required to complete the forms to name the absent parent/parents for their children. MFIP caregivers must assign their rights to child support, spousal maintenance, child care support, and medical support to the State of Minnesota. They must report direct child support payments they receive from the other parent. They must cooperate with child support, by providing correct information. Failure to cooperate with child support may result in a 30% sanction of the cash/food portion of the grant. Non-compliance with child support also counts toward the 7 occurrences and may lead to a 100% sanction.

Caregivers must repay overpayments. There are good cause reasons why the client may not wish to cooperate. The client will be given a list of good cause circumstances when they are asked to complete the forms. They may declare good cause at any time.

Child Support services can provide services to help in: locating parents; establishing paternity; establishing orders; modifying, reviewing and adjusting orders for support; enforcing orders for support; cooperating with other states when one parent does not live in Minnesota; collecting and processing payments.

For payment information call the Payment Information Integrated Voice Response at 651-215-5630. For general information call 651-296-2542.

(a) Child Support Pass-Through

The child support collected in the month it is due is passed-through to the caregiver. The child support payments are disbursed as they are received. They are sent to the payee the next working day after they are received. Child support payments are budgeted against the grant two months hence. Example: A child support payment received in January will be reported as household income and deducted from the cash/food portion of the grant in March. The payments are deducted from the grant dollar for dollar.

(b) Late Payments or Not at All
If a caregiver’s monthly income is 38% less than the amount used to determine the MFIP grant, he/she may claim a significant change. If approved, the Human Services Representative recalculates the grant based upon what the caregiver expects to receive and issues a check within seven days. Caregivers can only claim significant change twice in 12 months.

Section 14.03 MFIP AND DATA PRIVACY

Refer to the DHS Manual for discussion of Data Privacy issues. Agency staff must comply with Minnesota Government Data Practices rules and procedures regarding information relating to the MFIP client or family members.

Each agency should have procedures in place concerning the handling and storage of client data. Any breach of privacy should be reported to the Hennepin County Privacy Officer at hsph.privacy.officer@hennepin.us, phone #612-348-3937 and the ESP contract manager.

(a) Responding to Requests for Data (aka: Release of Information)

MFIP contracted ES Providers must be careful when obtaining a signed authorization to release form from the client. The release form must clearly indicate the client is releasing the information to the ES Provider for use with working with the client. ES Providers are NOT to use any release of information form which has the Hennepin County logo on it and/or may imply the information requested is to be released to HC.

Use of the DHS release of information forms by ESP staff is okay. If it is made clear on the form the release is to authorize the ESP not DHS. HC forms do NOT give the ESP the right to talk to the employer, landlord, child care worker, etc.

(b) MFIP Agencies and Hennepin County Human Service Representatives (HSRs)

The law clearly states that the MFIP Job Counselor and Human Services Representative can share information about clients who are involved in MFIP. The Human Services Representative does not need a signed authorization from the client to talk to the Job Counselor. Verifications provided to the ESP should be faxed into ECF and made accessible to the HSR. MFIP participants should not be required to provide duplicate information to more than one source. ESPs have access to the information in ECF known to Hennepin County and should not be requesting duplicate information from the client.

Verifications include information concerning employment, medical documentation, FSS extension information, etc.
(c) **HSPHD and ESP Relationship with ECF:**

Access to ECF by ESPs is a tool to help facilitate quick access to information that an ESP would typically need to get from an HSR or the client. The client should not be required to provide the same form to both the HSR and ESP. For example, an Employment Verification Form in ECF may be shared by both the ESP and HSR to perform their work.

Documents in ECF are considered to be HSPHD documents and are not part of the ESP file. The documents are available for the ESP to view in the context of their work. If the ESP needs documentation from ECF for the ESP case file it may be printed directly from ECF and placed in the ESP case file.

* ESPs are able to access and print documents from ECF for their case record under the authority of MN Stat. 13.46 Subd. 2(a)(7) which allows for the sharing of data without signed consent between personnel of the welfare system working in the same program. An ESP under contract with Hennepin County is considered part of the welfare system based on MN Stat. 13.46 Subd. 1(c).

(d) **Client requests ECF documentation from the ESP:**

If a client is requesting a copy of a document (or documents) and it is not a document that would be kept in an ESP case record, the ESP must get a signed release from the client authorizing HSPHD to release the information to the ESP. Then the ESP may provide the one or two documents. The ESP will refer clients directly to their HSR Team for requests beyond this number.

The ESP agency will use their agency release of information form. This form will state the following:

1. HSPHD is authorized to release the data/documents to the ESP.

2. Provide a description of the data/documents requested (example: Shelter form in ECF on 6/30/12)

The ESP will fax/mail the signed release to ECF. The ESP cover sheet will include:

1. Client name and maxis #

2. Based on the attached release of information the documents requested were printed by the ESP and provided to the client on this date:______

3. In BOLD letters: **No action needed by the HSR Team.**
(e) **MFIP Agencies and Anyone Else**

All Hennepin County Economic Assistance staff are instructed to **neither confirm nor deny** a person's status as a recipient of public assistance. A signed authorization to release must be in the case giving the worker permission to talk to an individual or representative, and what information is to be discussed. Only the information authorized may be discussed.

An MFIP Employment Services Provider is contracted with the City and the County and would fall under the same guidelines. Refer to the Tenessen Notice and the Economic Assistance Security and Data Privacy booklet for further information.

An MFIP Job Counselor MUST NOT discuss or distribute any information about a client to anyone without prior consent from the client. "ANYONE” includes: schools, landlords, friends, legal aid, probation officers, parents, and other MFIP Job Counselors who are not working with the case.

A signed authorization to release information must be in the case file prior to sharing information about a client. The authorization will specify the topics to be discussed and the person with whom it may be discussed. The information shared and discussed must be related to the client's progress in MFIP. A signed release must also be in the case prior to requesting information from anyone about the client.

(f) **Data Privacy Procedures**

As a contracted vendor with Hennepin County, your agency must have data privacy procedures in place. As part of the data privacy procedures, the agency must comply with Minnesota Government Data Practices regulations. Should a data privacy situation arise, a contracted vendor must seek advice and counsel within their agency first. The next step is to seek advice from the lawyer who represents your agency. Hennepin County will not represent your agency in court and your agency will pay all the costs.

Hennepin County and contracted agencies have access to state systems (e.g. MEC2 and WF1). A Data Access Agreement between DHS and HSPHD requires that HSPHD staff must receive training annually. Hennepin County requires MFIP ESP staff to complete the DHS Privacy training annually and receive a passing grade. The DHS training is available as a link on the DHS website.

Hennepin County contract monitors have access to the database to determine who completed the training.

(g) **Telephone Protocol**
In general, when leaving phone messages, less is better. You never know who may have access to the messages you leave and should always keep data privacy in mind when leaving a message. Leaving your name, phone number, the program you represent, and a request for a call back should be adequate in most situations.

Verbal and written communications around the issues of domestic violence are particularly sensitive because they may put the client at risk of physical harm if the abuser becomes aware of the communication.

(h) Use of Emails

Distinguish between emails sent over the internet and those sent over the county’s intranet email system.

Internet emails should not identify a client, either in the caption or in the body of the email. The email system is generally not intended for the transmission of sensitive, private, confidential or privileged materials, such as personnel decisions or private client data, which may be more appropriately communicated by written memorandum or direct conversation. Email sent through the internet is especially sensitive, as the transmission passes through many public infrastructures and is susceptible to interception and misuse at any point on the public network. In 2016, Hennepin County put an encryption system in place to send private data externally.

If vendors send information over the internet, they should not use client names or other identifiers.

(i) U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and ESP’s:


1. Data collected and maintained by Employment Service Providers about people is private. Private data is only accessible to the subject of the data or the subject’s authorized representative. Do not disclose this information to anyone else including the USCIS. See MFIP Employment Services Manual Section 4.3.15.
2. Non-citizens who are unable or unwilling to produce proof of their immigration status are ineligible for MFIP. Do NOT try to confirm their status with the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) without their authorization. Combined Manual Sections 11.03.27 and 10.18.11.
3. You may have cases in which one of the parents is a U.S. citizen and the other parent in the household is undocumented. The Minnesota Department of Human Services has strict protocols that prohibit employment service providers from contacting the USCIS to report people the provider suspects are here unlawfully. Combined Manual Section 11.03.27.03.
Section 14.04 USE OF PERSONAL PHONE TO CONDUCT MFIP BUSINESS

Hennepin County will rely on each ESP agency policy regarding the use of personal cell phones by their staff for conducting MFIP business. The ESP will consult with their legal advisors on this matter.

However, as a reminder, regardless of the media device, it is the responsibility of staff to protect private client data. If personal cell phones are used for work business the phones should have password protection. Any client data on phones (phone number, voice mails, etc) may be subject to discovery if requested as part of a MN Government Data Practices Act request. If the phone is stolen or lost and there is client contact information on the phone, the staff person should report the missing phone to their supervisor who may need to report it to the HSPHD Privacy Officer as a potential breach.

Section 14.05 HSPHD AND ESP RELATIONSHIP WITH ECF:

Access to ECF by ESPs is a tool to help facilitate quick access to information that an ESP would typically need to get from an HSR or the client. The client should not be required to provide the same form to both the HSR and ESP. For example, an Employment Verification Form in ECF may be shared by both the ESP and HSR to perform their work.

Documents in ECF are considered to be HSPHD documents and are not part of the ESP file. The documents are available for the ESP to view in the context of their work. If the ESP needs documentation from ECF for the ESP case file it may be printed directly from ECF and placed in the ESP case file.

* ESPs are able to access and print documents from ECF for their case record under the authority of MN Stat. 13.46 Subd. 2(a)(7) which allows for the sharing of data without signed consent between personnel of the welfare system working in the same program. An ESP under contract with Hennepin County is considered part of the welfare system based on MN Stat. 13.46 Subd. 1(c).

(a) Client Requests of ECF Documentation from the ESP:

If a client is requesting a copy of a document (or documents) and it is not a document that would be kept in an ESP case record, the ESP must get a signed release from the client authorizing HSPHD to release the information to the ESP. Then the ESP may provide the one or two documents. The ESP will refer clients directly to their HSR Team for requests beyond this number.
The ESP agency will use their agency release of information form. This form will state the following:

3. HSPHD is authorized to release the data/documents to the ESP.

4. Provide a description of the data/documents requested (example: Shelter form in ECF on 6/30/12)

The ESP will mail/fax the signed release to ECF. The ESP cover sheet will include:

4. Client name and maxis #

5. Based on the attached release of information the documents requested were printed by the ESP and provided to the client on this date:______

6. In BOLD letters: No action needed by the HSR Team.

SECTION: 14.06 CIU/ECF PROCEDURE CHANGES - 11/14/12

Faxing to ECF: The CIU fax number is 612-288-2981. Make sure the Maxis case number is printed on the documents.

Mailing to ECF:

• This process is much more efficient than faxing into ECF. Both the ESP’s & HSR’s will see a quicker turnaround time on the documents. They will see them in ECF sooner.
• This new process will save time on the ESP, CIU and HSR areas.
• The documents mailed in will be given priority at the CIU.
• The documents are kept for 45 days at CIU after imaging into ECF.
• Hennepin County will supply each ESP site location with postage paid envelopes and paperclips. The envelopes will be pre-addressed to PO Box 107 which is the ECF PO Box. No other business mail should be sent in this envelope to Hennepin County.
• This envelope will be used for both MFIP and Child Care Assistance documents to be imaged. Put EA and CCA in separate envelopes and write CCA on the envelope for CCA documents. However, the process in place for initial Child Care Assistance applications will remain the same. Continue to mail the initial Child Care Assistance applications to the Brookdale address.
• U. S. Postal service barcodes change in 2013. It is important to use only the ones supplied by the CIU. The new barcodes have spikes.
• Need more envelopes or paperclips? Call CIU at:
All documents received will be imaged as in-basket items unless noted by a post it or other method on the documents that you want it to go to the case folder only.

Hennepin County employees (DWP/MFIP/FSS) who have access to HC interoffice mail should use that as the primary method. The mail code for CIU is # 630. It is important that you identify yourself on interoffice envelopes. The next choice would be the mail. (There is also a “special CIU/ECF bin” on the CP 3rd floor for pick up.) Continue to mail the initial Child Care Assistance application to the main address at Brookdale.

PROCEDURES

- Write the MAXIS case number on the first page of a new document (not every page).
- No need for a cover letter.
- Send the original documents in most cases, no need to photocopy them unless you need it for the ESP case file. No need to worry about two-sided documents-both pages will be imaged into ECF.
- It is preferable to send more than one case or document in an envelope. The envelopes will be big enough to put multiple documents in them. This will save postage expenses. Just make sure the MAXIS case number is on the first page of each document.
- Use paperclips to keep documents together for each case. Avoid stapling documents together. CIU has paperclips available upon request.
- The ESP may decide the frequency of the mailings depending on the volume and the priority of the information to be imaged. Daily, every other day, weekly, etc. Other things to think about are: The 10 day cutoff for sanctions, HRF due dates, WPR preliminary reports, etc.

Section 14.06 DHS/DEED/HC SYSTEMS ACCESS

A DWP/MFIP contracted ESP will need access to various DHS and Hennepin County computer systems in order to access information and work with clients. The ESP Director or Manager must determine what systems the individual needs access to and the level of access necessary for the position. The Director/Manager will complete the paperwork and request the access for the individual. The procedures to do this and the forms necessary to complete the access requests are available on the HC MFIP & DWP Employment Services website. This is the link: [http://www.hennepin.us/portal/site/HennepinUS/menuitem.b1ab75471750e40fa01dfb47c6f06498/?vgnextoid=a68891a45c2f3210VgnVCM20000048114689RCRD](http://www.hennepin.us/portal/site/HennepinUS/menuitem.b1ab75471750e40fa01dfb47c6f06498/?vgnextoid=a68891a45c2f3210VgnVCM20000048114689RCRD)
The access request forms are processed in the order they are received. HC security states it may take up to two weeks depending on system requested. Generally, it doesn’t take that long.

The ESP Director/Manager must report staff turnover at the agency. This includes staff who terminate employment at the agency, a staff person moving within the same agency to work in another agency program (not MFIP/DWP) or staff transfers within the agency to a location outside Hennepin County. Email Terri Ellingsworth at Terri.Ellingsworth@hennepin.us with the details as soon as possible.

DHS/HC/DEED systems access may change or be terminated depending on the situation. The access was approved for use at the specific ESP. The ESP is responsible for data privacy & security access until the access is terminated on the DHS/HC/DEED systems.

If a staff person terminates employment at one ESP and accepts employment at another ESP the new employer must request the appropriate DHS/HC/DEED system access. The staff person is not to use the previous ESP system access.

(a) **ESP must provide a business reason for the staff access**

The staff person needs to have a business reason for access. The ESP Manager must state the business reason when requesting the access. For example: even if the state allows two access points (such as for Maxis), the Gov’t Data Practices Act requires that we only allow access to private data when it is necessary to perform our jobs. Further, if contracted agencies are gaining access to Hennepin County private data, the agency is only part of the “welfare system” to the extent they are needed to perform responsibilities covered by the contract. For instance, the County should not grant a second access point to an agency where there is only one person who is doing work under a Hennepin County contract if the only justification is that each agency can have two access points. However, if the business justification is that one person primarily does most of the work, and the second access point will be used by a staff member who backs up the primary user, the County could grant access.

(b) **Monitoring of DHS and HC System Usage**

Security at DEED/ DHS and Hennepin County monitor the staff access to the systems. If someone has not used a system for a period of time they will terminate the access. This is for both data security and also for financial reasons as there is a cost associated with each individual access.
Periodically, the ESP should review the access provided to each staff person to determine if it is still appropriate for the position. If someone only uses a particular system on occasion perhaps there are other ways for them to get the information rather than direct system access. Individuals should be discouraged from logging onto a system periodically to keep their access active if they are not really using the system.

(c) **System Access and Need to Know**

Access to any DHS/HC system is strictly for business purposes. Staff should not be browsing cases or looking up information on family, friends, neighbors etc. Do not share passwords with co-workers or use access to a system to look up client information for a co-worker who does not have a business reason.

(d) **Shared Master Index (SMI)**

The Shared Master Index, or SMI, is an identity management database maintained by the State of Minnesota. Its purpose is to maintain one master record of each person who applies for aid, to reduce or eliminate double records across the state for the same person, and to coordinate information entered for clients on multiple software platforms.

Section 14.07 PRIVILEGED CASES ON MAXIS

A privileged case is one that has some circumstances that makes it unavailable to anyone who is not the Human Services Representative or the HSR supervisor. Below are a few examples of when a case will be privileged:

- Child is in foster care
- Client is a victim of torture
- Some cases involving domestic violence
- By client request. Clients may be afraid of a stalker or perhaps just a nosey relative or coworker.
- High profile cases such as cases in the news or that involve well known people
- Identity changes.

If a case is coded as “privileged” on MAXIS it will not carry an address over on the WFI referral. This is an added precaution for the client’s privacy. Even if MAXIS is coded a privileged ECF IS accessible and the ESP may be able to get the address information from there. However, in some cases even ECF is coded privileged. Contact the HSR to discuss these cases.
Section 14.08 REPRESENTING COUNTY POSITIONS VS PERSONAL VIEWS

County employees and Contract Service Providers have a right to:

1. Influence or promote governmental or legislative action
2. Respond to media or public inquiries

However, when doing so, the employee or Contract Service provider, should make it clear that he/she is speaking in his/her individual capacity only, unless specifically authorized to speak as a representative of the County.

Please see County Board Resolution 91-1-41R1, Appendix C.

Section 14.09 AVOIDING APPARENT CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Potential MFIP enrollees should not receive services from an agency which employs a relative or close friend of theirs. They should be referred to another MFIP agency. If the client has not reported the relationship (they should be asked about this at intake), it is the ethical duty of the employee to report any relationship which may appear to others to involve a potential conflict of interest.

MFIP vendors who have a school or work setting on site must have the school registrar complete information needed for the MFIP case file. The MFIP Job Counselor must refrain from signing off on school activities for MFIP clients.

Clients are asked to pick their top three choices of vendors. If it turns out a friend or relative is employed at the agency selected, the agency must notify Hennepin County so that another agency may be chosen.

Section 14.10 REPORTING MFIP FRAUD

Because of the contracted nature of the relationship between vendors and the County, MFIP Job Counselors have the same responsibilities for reporting fraud that county employees do. The MFIP program will follow the guidelines on fraud involvement from the Economic Assistance Administrative Manual. The Manual states:

"An employee who has information indicating that a recipient is receiving benefits to which the recipient is not entitled will report such information to the Fraud Unit.

Violations of this standard will normally be considered gross misconduct."
Examples of what a Job Counselor must report:

- The client has reported earned income.
- The client won the lottery or received an inheritance.
- The client isn't living at the address reported to MFIP.
- The client's children are no longer living with the client.
- The other parent is in the home but MFIP eligibility is based on continued absence.

Effective 10/1/07, any month during which cash assistance is received by an assistance unit with a mandatory member who is disqualified for wrongfully obtaining public assistance, will be considered toward the time limit for the disqualified member. The 60 month clock will count. The disqualified caregivers MUST continue to participate in MFIP employment Services during the disqualification period. Failure of the disqualified caregiver to comply could result in sanctioning of the MFIP grant unless there is good cause. Client support services are available to the disqualified member for EP activities.

Hennepin County is accountable to the State for the funding/grants received and for following statutes correctly. Hennepin County is also accountable to the taxpayers and clients to maintain program integrity. The County has a Fraud Unit that works to detect program violations to prevent ongoing fraudulent activities. It also will investigate situations where it appears there is an intentional program violation.

The Hennepin County ESP MFIP website has forms for completion and faxing to the Fraud Unit at 612-348-9040. Or call the Fraud tip line number at 612-348-4952. The email address is: hsph.FAA.service.fraud@hennepin.us.

When an MFIP client is under investigation, do not put information of this in the WF1 case notes and do not inform the client or make reference to it.

When in a fraud disqualification, the client may apply for child care assistance on the Basic Sliding Fee waiting list. The child care unit will determine if the client is eligible for child care assistance under that program.

Section 14.11 RETURNED MAIL

Notify the HSR immediately when client mail is returned to your agency as “undeliverable.” If the worker has received a new address from the client, you can re-send the letter to the new address. If the Human Services Representative has the same address, they will send the client a request to verify the current shelter status. NOITS that were sent and returned to the agency will remain valid if the HSR has the same address on file. The agency will proceed with the sanction process and keep the returned NOITS and envelope in the case file.
HSRs are instructed to notify the Job Counselor of address changes by way of the Status Update form. Should the client inform you of an address change use the Status Update form to notify the HSR.

Section 14.12 HENNEPIN COUNTY DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

There are two levels of dispute resolution if the client doesn’t agree with the contents of the plan or has received a Notice of Intent to Sanction. The levels are conciliation conference or a fair hearing at the State level.

1. Each MFIP vendor agency must designate someone within the agency, other than a Job Counselor, as the person to whom clients can bring complaints against actions taken or decisions made by the Job Counselor. (The person who supervises the Job Counselor would be a logical designee.)

   The first step is the MFIP Conciliation to try to settle the issue within the agency. If resolution is not achieved and the client wishes to further pursue the complaint, the client may proceed to step 2.

2. After bringing her/his complaint to the designated person within the vendor agency, the client is still not satisfied, she/he should appeal in writing to the State. The notification must be in writing and sent within 15 days.

3. The client has the option of appealing directly to the State without taking step # 1. The client must send the written appeal to the State within 30 days of the action taken.

The address for the Department of Human Services is:
DHS, Appeals Division, Human Services Bldg.,
444 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-3818.

Section 14.13 APPEALS

The MFIP participant has the right to appeal any action taken by the Job Counselor or the MFIP program. This right to appeal should be told to the client at the time the EP are completed by the Job Counselor and the client. A copy of the MFIP client's right to fair treatment and right to appeal should be signed by the client and retained in the case file. Any time a NOITS is sent it must notify the client of the right to appeal the action.

The appeal hearing is scheduled with the State of Minnesota and handled through the Hennepin County Appeals Unit. The Job Counselor will be notified by the Appeal Unit...
when an appeal is requested. The Job Counselor will be required to attend the appeal and prepare the information for the appeal.

Direct correspondence to: Hennepin County Appeals Unit, Century Plaza, 330 S. 12th St., Minneapolis, MN 55404. The phone number is 612-348-2550.

To be complete an appeals packet must include the following:
- DHS 33 or actual appeal letter
- DHS 35 State Appeal Summary
- Copies of the EP
- Copies of relevant case notes and correspondence
- Copies of manual references and instructional bulletins
- Medical/Psychological reports if relevant

Make four copies of the packet, one each for the case file, the client, the State and the HC Appeals Unit.

Section 14.14 CASE STRUCTURES

The case file is the record of the client's participation in the MFIP program. It is the record of the actions taken by the MFIP agency. The case file may be examined and audited by city, county, state or federal agencies. The information contained in the case file is used during an appeal process. Information in the case is used to calculate overpayments.

The MFIP office does not specify a single case order for filing. The case must be organized in such a way that an agency coworker or an auditor would be able to follow and understand.

File in chronological order with the oldest correspondence on the bottom and working up to the most current correspondence. Do not discard or store anything needed for audit purposes.

The RFP requires the agency to retain the case file for ten years after closing the case.

Refer to DHS Manual for what is required in a case file.

WF1 case file

Hennepin County WF1 cases should have case notes completed and closed by the end of the next business day. The Employability Measure (EM) should be completed and entered into WF1 by the end of the next business day.
Filing Client Support Check Requests

Keep a copy of the check request, a photocopy of the check, the bills/receipts, and any calculations made to determine the check amount. File the copies together. It should be apparent what was paid and how the amount was calculated.

Section 14.15 PARTICIPATION TRACKING

Refer to the DHS manual on how to track activities and what verifications are required. In addition to the case note details of the meeting or phone call, indicate the time spent on the interaction. For example, most agencies have a “standard” overview for clients. The also have a standard case note. In this case note would say “tracking xxx hour/s for the overview”. The case note for a phone conversation would include “15 minutes with client” plus the call details.

Participation tracking does not include ESP prep contact time or other normal case management functions.

(a) Taking a “vacation” or going on a leave while on MFIP:

MFIP is a comprehensive work-focused program. MFIP clients are encouraged and expected to work. MFIP participants who work often are accruing vacation time from their employer and are paid while on vacation. The hours are tracked on MAXIS and for participation tracking purposes the client is “working.” MFIP participants who are not employed are not accruing vacation time. The activities in their EP do not include vacation or leave time. The EP activities are directed toward the most direct route to self sufficiency.

Per the State 4/07: “There isn’t a policy regarding vacations. The issue is whether or not the person is complying with the EP. There isn’t anything in state or federal law that talks about vacations or extended “leaves.” However, it is important to know why the person is on a “vacation” or on a “leave” out of the state or country. If this is related to a death in the family, or some other family emergency that must be addressed, then good cause would apply.

The client should notify the Job Counselor if they expect to be gone, for what time frame and the reason for the trip. The Job Counselor will make the decision about whether the client is out of compliance. The Job Counselor can ask for documentation in order to determine if it is good cause. In addition, there are situations when good cause could exist for part of the time the client is not complying with the EP activities but not for the entire time frame the client is gone.
If the client is sanctioned and it is appealed then the issues will have to do with what the EP activities were, whether the client had good cause, and whether notice requirements were met.

Refer to DHS Manual for good cause definitions and the holidays and excused absences policies.

\[(b) \text{ MAXIS Coding for Universal Participation}\]

When a caregiver has documented a disability or the need to be in the home to care for a disabled family member (including special medical criteria), the Job Counselor should send a status update to the HSR to inform them of the “special circumstance” so that MAXIS may be correctly coded.

\[(c) \text{ Self Support Index:}\]

The Self-Support Index is more of a long-term look at MFIP clients after one, two and three years. The Self-Support Index determines whether the client is still on MFIP and/or is working. The formula is based on characteristics prevalent in a county (average education level, job market, etc.) and each county’s requirements are different based on these factors.

Example: The 2005 allocation is based on results during 4th quarter 2003 and 2nd quarter 2004. Counties need to meet or exceed their requirements in both quarters in order to receive the 2.5% incentive payment. If counties exceed their requirements during both quarters, they not only get the withheld 2.5%, but an additional 2.5% bonus.

Section 14.16 WF1 & DEED/HELPDESK

There is an agreement between DEED/DHS in which the DEED HelpDesk will deal with some of the ESP/WF1 problems. In the following cases the ESP will deal directly with the DEED HelpDesk rather than the TTL’s. They are:

- Referrals that are “aged” out (over 90 days)
- Declined referrals that “age” out
- Inactivated referrals that can not be “reactivated”
- Cases that are incorrectly closed

Section 14.17 PRELIMINARY TANF HOURS REPORT

This report gives Employment Services Providers an opportunity to correct hours of participation before the final participation rate reports come out. This will help both your agency’s participation rate and the participation rate of Hennepin County as a whole. The
preliminary report is generated based on information entered on MAXIS and WF1 for the budget month two months prior to the current month. MAXIS data is sometimes updated after the preliminary report is run, which is why you’ll sometimes see a difference between what’s listed on the preliminary report and what’s listed on MAXIS.

Both WF1 hours and MAXIS hours can be updated if the changes are made before the data freezes. This occurs on the last day of the second month after the report month. For example, the August WPR data would be frozen on October 31st.

(a) **WF1 Hours**

View the Preliminary WF1 Hours column on the report. If participant had additional countable hours that can be coded on WF1, enter them prior to cut-off! Do not report changes in WF1 hours to the County.

(b) **MAXIS Hours**

There are two types of hours which can be updated on MAXIS:

1) Employment Hours – are counted differently for participants working for wages and those who are self-employed or on commission.
   - Working for wages: count the hours listed on the paychecks received during the report month (e.g., 80 hours listed on a paycheck received on 6/1 would be counted in June even though the hours were actually worked in May.
   - Self-employed or working on commission: minimum wage hours calculated by MAXIS after expenses are deducted. For example, the client may declare working 200 hours in a self employment activity, however, DRA does not allow self-reporting of hours for these participants. After MAXIS calculates the NET income and minimum wage hours, the client may end up with 50 hours of participation hours for the month. Rarely will a self-employed client meet the Work Participation Rate.

2) FSS cases – if a client was coded as an FSS case prior to the report month, they should not count on the WPR. The case will not be disregarded from WPR until the month that the eligible version is approved in Maxis by the HSR.

If participant had work hours not reflected on the preliminary report (Preliminary MAXIS Hours column):
1) Check hours on MAXIS. If hours on MAXIS are correct, no further action is necessary.

2) If hours aren’t on MAXIS, check ECF and make sure the pay stubs on file reflect increased hours. If they do and if hours (by themselves or in combination with countable WF1 hours) are enough to meet participation rate, give participant’s name, case number, and brief explanation to your agency’s contact as soon as possible but no later than a couple of work days before the end of the month. Your agency’s representative will send this information to the Hennepin County Coordination Unit at: hsph.es.team.ttl@co.hennepin.mn.us. The TTLs have a template to use when sending in the cases.

Section 14.18 TANF FINAL WORK PARTICIPATION REPORT

This report contains four tabs:

- MFIP participants assigned to your agency who did have enough hours to meet the MFIP participation rate during the report month.
- MFIP participants assigned to your agency who did not have enough hours to meet the MFIP participation rate during the report month.
- The Vendor Summary identifies the overall agency participation rate.
- The Participation Rate by Site breaks down the agency participation rate by each site.

At the completion of the July 2009 TANF Final Work Participation Report, Hennepin County will no longer be utilizing ESP responses to make adjustments to the ESP Performance Outcomes. In order to maximize participation it is strongly recommended the ESPs utilize the Preliminary Hours Report.

Section 14.19 AUDITS AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR MISSPENT FUNDS

When a federal audit is conducted, the audit may include the entire time frame of the MFIP program. ANY federal money spent without proper documentation may be considered not eligible for federal reimbursement.

According to contracts with MFIP vendor agencies, the agencies are held financially responsible for all overpayments. For this reason, the Hennepin County MFIP office conducts "internal" audits to find and correct errors now to avoid problems later when an "external" audit is conducted.
After an audit is conducted, a report is sent to the vendor agency. This report may include the client support and child care spending errors found in the cases monitored as well as procedure errors.

It is expected the agency will correct the individual cases pulled as well as check the rest of the case load to make sure similar errors are corrected. It is suggested that each agency follow up with their staff and check the case files to make sure the corrective actions were taken. The agency should use the audit findings as a basis for further in house training and discussion with their staff.

Section 14.20 PURCHASING AND INVENTORY CONTROL

The MFIP Employment Services Provider must follow the Hennepin County policy on purchasing and inventory control policies and procedures as described in the Contract Agreement. The policies apply to purchases of goods, supplies, equipment and other items by the vendor for use in performing contracted activities.

The following procedures will be used:

1. All furnishings and equipment costing $1,000.00 or more requires the prior written approval of the HC Contract Manager assigned to the program for which the purchase is being requested. Each request shall be supported by at least three written price quotes.
2. After the request has been approved, and the equipment received by the requesting agency/unit, the receiver shall notify the Contract Manager or a representative of Hennepin County HSPHD Work Supports Area, who shall notify the IT department to attach a County asset tag and complete the appropriate Inventory Control Forms.
3. Moving of ANY County Assets, from initial room/building will require notification to your MFIP Contract Manager. This request shall include why, when, and where the requested destination is.

Disposition of all salvage and surplus property is governed by State laws and Hennepin County rules. If property is no longer serviceable, or is no longer needed for the program it was intended, notify the Contract Manager in writing for appropriate disposition of that property.

Direct all requests for purchase approval, except computers and related items, to the the Contract Manager. The Contract Manager will approve, deny, and forward the requests to DHS as appropriate. Purchases with a unit cost of over $2,500 must be approved by DHS. Direct all requests to purchase computers and related equipment to the Contract Manager.
Section 14.21 MFIP TRAINING PLAN FOR JOB COUNSELORS

The MFIP Training Committee created a training plan for agencies to use as a flexible guide to train new Job Counselors. This plan is to be used to assist the MFIP agency in preparing the Job Counselor for success on the job by providing a framework to supplement existing agency staff training and/or to provide a starting point for training new staff.

Training Job Counselors to work with MFIP clients is a collaborative endeavor between the ESP, the Department of Human Services, the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, as well as other contracted presenters. The ESP agency has the primary responsibility for training the Job Counselor.