

## 2022-2023 County MFIP Biennial Service Agreement

January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023

Enter the county's unique ID number	62RAM966
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### Contact Information

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**Note: Please review the 2022-2023 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement Bulletin for more details before you complete this document.**

#### A. Needs Statement

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

During the pandemic, Ramsey County saw an increase of about 20% in MFIP caseloads. With the federal and DHS waivers that were previously in place for waiving certain program requirements, this increase was manageable. Now as program waivers are being lifted, the higher caseloads coupled with staff turnover will be a challenge that the Financial Assistance Services Department (FASD) faces. The Financial Worker position continues to be an entry point to other positions within the County. Many staff who leave this entry level position are leaving for outside opportunities or promoting to other permanent full-time positions within the Department and/or County. The FASD continues to work with Workforce Solutions and Human Resources to

find qualified candidates who can step into these entry level positions when available.

In addition, the lack of updated technology also continues to be a challenge serving MFIP/ DWP families. Since the pandemic, FASD has transitioned most staff to an ad hoc full-time work from home model. With minimal in-office presence, the lack of available technology for residents to get a hold of their worker or submit documents in a virtual environment has been difficult. In addition, FASD systems and software lacks the updates and functionality required to perform optimal services in a virtual environment. FASD continues to work with Information Services to better meet Department needs.

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

DWP and MFIP serve about 85% single parents who will continue to be a vulnerable but important segment of our workforce throughout this biennium. However, they have had to disproportionately put their employment aspirations on hold or altered them often dramatically due to the following challenges:

- The nature in which work and educational opportunities have evolved through the pandemic to become virtual or hybrid is likely to continue post-covid. This will present some new challenges when it comes to ensuring that families have adequate digital literacy skills and access to technology to stay competitive and engaged.
- The recovery of the economy post-covid is also very uncertain when it comes to the types of jobs that will be available and who will have the skills to take full advantage of those opportunities. Although a challenge, this presents an opportunity for employment services to ensure we are taking full advantage of working closely with educators, occupational skills providers and employers to look at the transferability of skills, design new opportunities and make full use of supported employment to train new skills to create pathways into family sustaining careers or self-employment.
- Virtual delivery of employment services will continue to be optimized moving forward and challenges may vary from provider to provider when it comes to cost, staff skills to learn new technology and ensuring that there continues to be in-person access to families who need it.
- As we enter into the first quarter of the new biennium the caseloads will be uncertain not only due to the ongoing pandemic but also due to the complex needs of families as they relate to the ending of eviction moratoriums, covid in the school systems, heightened adult and children mental health needs, instability in caseloads and caseload sizes, etc.
- Access to quality, affordable and flexible child-care options to meet the needs of working parents will be a challenge. Since 2016, Ramsey County has lost 1,500 licensed childcare slots—approximately 30% of total capacity. Further, more than two-thirds of programs in Ramsey County had to lay off staff during the pandemic.
- As a county that provides many social service programs that often times serve the same residents, we continue to work toward finding ways to make it easier for families to locate and navigate services. The challenges are many as different systems have different rules and regulations, levels of compliance and levels of resources.

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

Ramsey County has a strong network of community-based organizations as well as internal county services and programs to support those most in need. Over this biennium, WFS will strengthen existing relationships and foster new ones to better coordinate services in a way that works for families. Below are some of the initiatives and strengths that we are most proud of:

- Ramsey County has a culturally specific agency model, where services incorporate and build upon participant, family, community and cultural assets. We continue to work on strengthening this model through ongoing community engagement efforts.
- The county's strategic priorities align with our desired goals for reducing racial disparities and increasing meaningful efforts toward authentic community engagement. The county has a county wide community evaluation board to ensure more community voices are heard through hosting community conversations and other methods to collect ongoing input and recommendations. Finally, the county is prioritizing a strategic effort around Residents First. The model has us re-examining our methods of service delivery and having us think about accessibility to services.
- We continue to develop a model with Public Health to better connect young MFIP parents with early childhood screening, child and teen check-ups, home visiting, social supports, primary healthcare and other resources. Over this biennium the county will be implementing and refining an early childcare and education initiative which will connect young parents with early childcare resources utilizing family coaches, navigators and employment counselors. This effort will be inclusive of creating a workforce pathway to develop additional licensed childcare providers.
- Another initiative called Reliable Opportunities Advance Dads Support (ROADS) is where WFS is partnering with the Ramsey County Attorney's Child Support Services office to provide employment services to fathers who have children in MFIP households.
- WFS is a partner in the St Paul Promise Neighborhood's "The People's Fellowship" (TPF) which is a whole family approach focused on improving the lives of multiple generations of MFIP eligible families living with the Promise Neighborhood in St Paul. 2021 is the last year where TPF will be supported through DHS' Whole Family Systems but will wrap-up with a community participatory action research project (CPAR) which will provide an opportunity for us to learn about the effectiveness of TPF and hear recommendations to inform future MFIP service delivery models. WFS is aligning caseloads with families who live in the SPPN area to provide some continuity of service and service alignment.
- Employment Services has been utilizing person-centered practices such as Motivational Interviewing, coaching, and strengths-based assessments for many years. WFS has developed and is implementing a research-based and person-centered approach which is called the Lifelong Learning Initiative (LLI). LLI helps participants identify their skills and strengths and utilize them to set and achieve measurable employment gains. In this biennium, MFIP/DWP will continue to incorporate and optimize LLI in employment services and we are developing a system-wide support and learning model for all of our service providers to ensure sustainability and relevance.
- Families Achieving Success Today (FAST), provides a comprehensive set of co-located services designed specifically for families who experience multiple barriers to employment in Family Stabilization Services, supporting WFS's belief that every parent can work to some degree and provides the opportunity for parents to obtain employment and utilize wrap around services to retain their jobs over time. Over the next biennium, FAST will be involved in a national study called NextGen to learn more about the effectiveness of FAST, may validate previous outcomes of FAST, will document the implementation model and true cost of providing FAST services to families on MFIP.
- Organizational Structure and Economic Inclusion: The intentionality of our Ramsey County organizational structure is a strength for our programs. Our Workforce Solutions department is strategically embedded into the Economic Growth and Community Investment Service Team ensuring that there is comprehensive effort to embed people into our economic development efforts. This alignment allows for deeper collaboration between Community and Economic Development and a newly established Housing Stability Department is actualized through the Ramsey County Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan which is the first of its kind in the nation articulating strategies for economic and workforce inclusion intersecting workforce,

housing, and economic development

- New website: Since late 2019, we've partnered with our Community and Economic Development department to create a business-centric web portal to attract and retain businesses. Embedded in this site are a variety of tools that support not only businesses but also community partners and job counselors including Job Connect, an interactive job board, a training dashboard, an opportunity to showcase community organizations and also labor market information.
- Virtual Job Fairs: Our department's leadership and alignment into our Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) efforts, is strength to our system. Since the onset of the pandemic, we have been focused on making sure that employers and job seekers can continue to make much needed connections. In partnership with other workforce development areas in the metro, we launched a virtual job fair platform that has hosted dozens of virtual events that have showcased different career and industry paths. MFIP counselors are made aware of these events and serve as conduits of helping MFIP participants to fully engage in these opportunities.
- Temp Connect: Ramsey County continues to work intentionally on ensuring we have a diverse workforce. One of our most flexible ways to bring on new employees is through our temporary employment process. While these roles only have a six-month duration, they are an opportunity to experience a variety of roles in the county. Through our newly established Temp Connect program, residents enrolled in Ramsey County workforce programs, including MFIP and DWP, are given a unique early opportunity to submit interest into temporary openings with hiring managers guaranteeing an interview for those that meet minimal qualifications.
- Over this biennium, WFS will continue to increase linkages for providers to county resources and efforts and will convene all providers on critical topics, provide more technical assistance and program monitoring.

4. What strengths and resources do you have available to address the needs of your participants? *Please check all the resources available to participants in your service area and check whether the resource is available within MFIP financial or employment services “in-house” or from a partner organization (county resources with developed connections to MFIP), and/or an external community resource or both. If you lack the resources in your service area, check the Resource Gaps column. Add any “other” resources that you consider necessary.*

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

5. County Program Contact Information

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

MFIP Employment Services staff contact name	Michelle Belitz
phone	651-266-6054
email address	Michelle.belitz@co.ramsey.mn.us

DWP staff contact name	Lisa Guetzkow
phone	651-266-6006
email address	Lisa.Guetzkow@co.ramsey.mn.us

Financial Assistance Services staff contact name	Tina Curry
phone	651-266-4365
email address	Tina.curry@co.ramsey.mn.us

6. Employment Services Provider(s) Information

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

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

Name and Address	Contact Person	Phone	Email	Population Served				
				MFIP ES	DWP ES	FSS	Teen Parents	200% FPG
American Indian Family Center 579 Wells Street, Saint Paul, MN 55101	Kristin Kinney	651-793-3803	Kristin_kinney@aifc.net	x		x		
Avivo 1700 West Highway 36 Ste 500, Roseville, MN 55113	Julie Kizlik	651-752-8630	Julie.kizlik@avivomn.org	x		x		
Goodwill Easter Seals MN 553 Fairview Avenue North, Saint Paul, MN 55104	Andrew Freeberg	651-379-5874	Afreeberg@gesmn.org	x		x		
Hired 800 Minnehaha Avenue E., Suite 200 St. Paul, MN 55106	John Klem	651-999-5670	John.klem@hired.org	x		x		

Hmong American Partnership 1075 Arcade Street, Saint Paul, MN 55106	Allen Malicsi	651-495-1601	allenm@hmong.org	x		x		
Ramsey County Public Health 90 Plato Blvd West, Suite 200, Saint Paul, MN 55107	Sharon Cross	651-266-1827	Sharon.cross@co.ramsey.mn.us				x	
Ramsey County Workforce Solutions 160 East Kellogg Boulevard, Saint Paul, MN 55101	Lisa Guetzkow	651-266-6006	Lisa.guetzkow@co.ramsey.mn.us	x	x	x		x
YW Works 375 Selby Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55102	Jamela Pettiford	612-440-6217	jpettiford@ywcastpaul.org	x		x		

## B. Service Models

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

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

No

Yes, **check all that apply.**

African American

African immigrant

American Indian

Asian American

Asian immigrant

Hispanic/ Latino

Other, please specify in the text box below.

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

- Home visits
- Off-site meeting opportunities
- 
- Sanction outreach services
- Incentives, please specify: Merchant specific gift cards

Other, please specify in the text box below.

FAST collaborative and wraparound services

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

- Sector job development
- Individual job development

Other, please specify in the text box below.

Job Connect

4. Do you have an ongoing job development partnership or sector base with community employers to help participants with employment?

- No
- Yes, **check all activities employer provides.**

- Interview opportunities
- Job placement
- On-site job training
- Job skills training
- Job shadowing
- Work experience
- Helps plan training programs

Other, please specify in the text box below

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

- No
- Yes, **check all that apply.**

- Available to assist with issues that develop on the job
- Financial planning
- Mentoring
- Personal contact with the employee and how often: at minimum one time per
- Soft skills training
- Transportation

month \_\_\_\_\_

Other, please specify in the text box below.

**How long do you provide job retention services?**

- Less than 3 months
- 12 months
- 6 months
- Other: up to 9 months \_\_\_\_\_

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



No  Yes, **check all that apply.**

- Career laddering
- Coaching/mentoring
- Education/training
- Networking
- Ongoing job search

Other, please specify in the text box below.

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

No  Yes, **check all that apply.**

- Pathways to Prosperity (P2P)
- National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)
- Work Keys
- Other: community based providers that have training, adult basic education, customized training/education opportunities through a recent request for proposal, My Next Move \_\_\_\_\_

### Family Stabilization Services (FSS)

1. Do you have professionals available to assist with FSS cases?

No  Yes, **check all that apply.**

- Adult Mental Health professional
- Adult Rehabilitation Mental Health Services (ARMHS) worker
- Chemical Health professional
- Children's Mental Health professional
- Psychologist
- Public Health Nurse
- Social Worker
- Vocational Rehabilitation worker

Other, please specify in the text box below.

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

No  Yes, **check all that apply.**

- Children's Mental Health Services
- Child Wellness Check-ups
- Public Health Nurse home visiting services
- Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)

Other, please specify in the text box below.

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

No  Yes

### Services for families not on MFIP/DWP but are under 200% of Federal Poverty Guideline

1. Do you provide services to families recently receiving MFIP/DWP or families at risk of receiving MFIP or diversionary work program but are under 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG)?

No  Yes, **check all the services that apply.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child care       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Job retention services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GED                         | <input type="checkbox"/> ABE/ELL Classes                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Job postings     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer Lab Access    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support Services |  |

Other, please specify in the text box below.

2. Do you serve families not recently on MFIP/DWP that are under 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG)?

No  Yes, describe below

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

No  Yes, describe below

Through WFS and in partnership with the county's child support office, we have a small program called Reliable Opportunities to Advance Dad Supports (ROADS). The Child Support office carefully reviews each potential referral utilizing the PRISM system to verify that the non-custodial parent has a child on MFIP in Ramsey County and that the income known to the Child Support office is below 200% FPG. Services provided are career counseling which includes employment goal development, referrals and connections to community resources or to occupational skills training opportunities. When employment status changes that is reported to child support and re-evaluated for FPG status.

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

Maxis  Proxy  
 Other

### Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Services for Teen Parents

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

No  Yes, **check all that apply for each age group.**

**Minors  
(under age 18)**

**Age 18/19**

- |                                     |                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Financial worker          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Employment service worker |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Social worker             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Public health nurse       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Child care worker         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Child protection worker   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other Job Role            |

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

	<u>Minors</u> <u>(under age 18)</u>	<u>Age 18/19</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Financial worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment service worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social worker (Social Services)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public health nurse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Child care worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child protection worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other job role: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

**Minors**  
**(under age 18)**

**Age 18/19**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, mandatory | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, mandatory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, voluntary            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, voluntary            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No                        | <input type="checkbox"/> No                        |

***C. Performance Measures; Racial/Ethnic Disparities***

1. Performance-based funding is determined by a service area's annualized Self-Support Index value. Review the information and report

links in this section to see the effect of performance on funding and reporting, based on Statute 256J.626, subdivision 7.

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

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

The S-SI and Range are annualized for the four quarters in the April through March year ending in the reporting year before the funding year. See the annualized report on the MFIP Reports page on the DHS website for 2021

<https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4651H-ENG>. A service area with an annualized S-SI "above" its customized Range of Expected Performance for 2021 will receive a

2.5 percent bonus added to its Consolidated Fund allocation for calendar year 2022.

[Minnesota Family Investment Program 2021 Annualized Self-Support Index \(PDF\)](#)

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

- If your service area performed "above" or "within," you can go to item 2.
- If your service area performed "below" for two consecutive years,, you then will have to **negotiate a multi-year improvement plan** with the commissioner. If no improvement is shown by the end of the multiyear plan, the next year's allocation must be decreased by 2.5 percent, to remain in effect until the service area performs within or above its Range of Expected Performance.

2. A **racial/ethnic disparity** is defined as a one-year Self Support Index that is five or more percentage points lower for a non-white racial/ethnic group than for the white group of MFIP/DWP-eligible adults in the county or consortium. The report "The Annual Summaries for counties of the Self Support and Work Participation performance measures" <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4214AG-ENG> on the MFIP Reports page includes a list of service areas that have a racial/ethnic disparity requiring action. (If your county has a disparity but data are missing for quarters with cell size too small to report, contact [benjamin.jaques-leslie@state.mn.us](mailto:benjamin.jaques-leslie@state.mn.us) to get the unpublished counts and percentage gaps.)

**If your county or consortium is not in the list, skip the following question.**

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

Ramsey County MFIP/DWP outcomes have shown persistent disparities between White participants and African American and American Indian participants and more recently Hispanic participants. Ramsey County Workforce Solutions has developed and implemented multiple strategies over the previous biennium through an RFP process with new community-based employment services providers beginning January 1, 2020. The current MFIP/DWP direct service system further developed strategies that worked over the previous five years to include new or enhanced services, including:

- Extended families now remain at the same service provider. Previously, only Ramsey County staff served extended families. Extended families in Ramsey County are disproportionately represented by communities experiencing racial disparities and this change allows families experiencing disparate outcomes to remain at their chosen provider.
- Teen parents are served directly by Public Health nurses to ensure both mother and child are healthy and focused on achieving a high school diploma or GED.
- Young adult parents (ages 18 to 24) are served by the county in a specialized unit to better coordinate and connect with other youth services, including access to Public Health nurses, WIOA Youth programming, early child care and education, and connections to CARES and ARPA funded programming and technology.
- Families achieving success today (FAST) is a full-family, multi-disciplinary program that has demonstrated improved engagement, education achievement, employment hours and earnings. FAST expanded its capacity from 180 to 240 families in 2020 and is now expanding again to serve up to 360 families.
  - FAST began in 2011 as a federal demonstration project as part of a national study of innovative programs improving earnings for those with mental or physical health conditions.
  - It was then selected and funded by DHS to be a racial equity and disparity reduction project from 2014 to 2016.
  - Since 2016, FAST has been funded from the MFIP Consolidated Fund
  - Three years of additional funding from the federal government is allowing FAST to expand to 360 families beginning in September 2021.

In addition to direct services provided mostly by employment counselors, Ramsey County is deploying a series of additional efforts and models to reduce racial disparities.

- Partners for Equity efforts- Ramsey County WFS contracts with three culturally specific community-based organizations to deliver comprehensive, strength-based, and culturally specific family stability services to African-American, American Indian and Hispanic families receiving MFIP.

The current Partners for Equity are:

- Network for the development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD)
  - Provide full-family services to strengthen family well-being through cultural resiliency and literacy skills.
  - Parents develop a self-determinizing plan and complete a cultural training series, Parent Power, as a cohort.
  - Eligible children complete a literacy program, (Sankofa) proven to increase reading levels, often by several levels.

- American Indian Family Center (AIFC)
  - Provide employment services, trainings and cultural opportunities from one location to all American Indian MFIP families choosing the Center
  - Available social services and children’s services co-located with MFIP employment services.
- Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)
  - Provide a series of dynamic workshops engaging families about increasing personal power to achieve individual and family goals.
  - Engage and empower through career and financial trainings.

Ramsey County engaged communities representing those experiencing disparities in MFIP/DWP outcomes to develop selection criteria for becoming Partner for Equity with WFS. Partners for Equity have each demonstrated:

- A mission rooted in the culture(s) and cultural identities of the participants and families served;
- A majority of the board and key executive leadership represent the race(s), ethnicities and cultures of the participants and families served;
- Employs or intends to employ management and direct service staff who, in part, reflect the race(s), ethnicities and cultures of the participants and families served;
- Services to increase participants’ employability in a manner that both acknowledges and responds to the legacies of historical trauma, racism, inequality and poverty that have negatively affected access to, and success with, education and employment opportunities.
- Services that incorporate and build on participants’ values, beliefs, worldviews, and traditions, many of which are rooted in or informed by culture and experience.

Cultural Consulting: Ramsey County values the communities we serve and the richness of consultation in a cultural context to better serve our families and residents in our employment and education programs. Through lending input and guidance, consultants are integral to our services and will be connected and engaged with communities experiencing racial disparities. Consultants will assist WFS with a number of interventions such as training, case consultations, policy and procedure review, coordination of community efforts and events, and community conversations. Cultural consultants were engaged even more heavily during the most recent biennium, most of which occurred during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ramsey County further developed relationships in the community through a CARES funded Trusted Messenger program focused on providing pandemic-related information to community members who previously may not have trusted traditional government communications.

Community Engagement is a high-level priority for Ramsey County and WFS. Early in the COVID-19 pandemic WFS engaged a number of community-based organizations to identify gaps and needs in the community for traditional programming and for new resources the county would develop as part of the CARES allocation. WFS used input from community partners to develop groups of services targeting populations with historic racial and ethnic disparities. These efforts ultimately paved the way for WFS to partner with more than 80 community-based organizations serving primarily residents representing communities with disparities. New partners continue to emerge assisting WFS in communicating program information with the community and providing additional referral services to program participants. WFS continues to build its network in the community, increasing its capacity to engage communities, especially those experiencing disparate outcomes.

WFS has representation in the St Paul Indians in Action learning cohort which is comprised of 10 county leaders and 10 members of the American Indian community. The cohort meets regularly to develop countywide principles for all of Ramsey County's work that impacts the American Indian Community; it will give us an opportunity to re-evaluate, improve and modify our service delivery efforts.

#### **D. Program Monitoring/Compliance**

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

- Budget control procedures for approving expenditures
- Cash management procedures for ensuring program income is used for permitted activities
- Internal policies around used of funds, i.e. participant support services
- Other, please specify in the text box below.

Annual fiscal and program monitoring of employment service providers

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

- Case consultation
- Sample case review by supervisors
- Sample case review by workers
- Other, please specify in the text box below.

Annual case file reviews by planners as part of annual monitoring visits

**If your service area has not made changes to your random drug testing policy since the last BSA, go to Section E.**

3. What procedures/policies do you have in place for administering random drug tests to MFIP participants who are convicted drug felons as required by Minnesota Statutes, section 256J.26, subdivision 1?

**Check one.**

- Written policy within the MFIP unit
- Coordination with Corrections
- Currently establishing new policy/procedure(s)
- Other, please specify in the text box below.

#### **E. Collaboration and Communication with Others**

1. How many employment services front-line staff in your county or consortium \_\_\_\_\_  
How many employment services front line staff in your county or consortium have has MAXIS access? 100  
How many managers/supervisors have MAXIS access? 12

2. Describe the process your service area uses to identify and resolve discrepancies between MAXIS and WF1 data in areas such as Family Stabilization Services coding, employment/hours, sanction status, etc.

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions MFIP employment services performance measures are data driven; the quality and integrity of that data is a priority. Ramsey County’s strategy for data management incorporates access to the State of Minnesota’s MAXIS Inquiry and Workforce One and the team of provider Data Specialists, WFS MIS, CHS FAS Management and Supervisors, and CHS Evaluators. Ramsey County Workforce Solutions provides data and requires provider agencies to analyze and use data to ensure that outcomes are achieved and process improvements made. Providers are required to dedicate 1 FTE to a Data Specialist role, a staff person with responsibility to help the provider most effectively produce results through data use. The Data Specialist is in a key role to help staff members achieve and/or exceed the performance measures and indicators. The Data Specialist works with their agency Supervisors and staff through an active process focusing and intervening on the key components of each measure in order to achieve the highest performance.

The primary responsibility of the Data Specialist is the collection, use, management and interpretation of participant performance data, as well as guidance and instruction for staff and management. Familiarity and high-end use of Workforce One, Electronic Document Management System and Maxis Inquiry are required. Helping others develop incremental skills and move toward high-end user status in Workforce One is within the role of the Data Specialist.

**F. Emergency Services**

1. Does your county provide emergency or crisis services from your Consolidated Fund?

No                       Yes

**Has your service area has made changes to your emergency services policy since the last BSA  
If yes, please submit your emergency / crisis plan: Make sure the character limit is 9999.**



## G. Other

### Administrative Cap Waiver

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

If your county is interested in applying for the waiver for the coming biennium, please complete the following four questions.

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

Over this biennium, Ramsey County will provide a supported work experience program that is designed to assist MFIP participants experiencing challenges in obtaining or maintaining public or private sector unsubsidized competitive employment. Participants engaged in the program will be placed in a subsidized work experience that will provide participants with work activities to develop new skills and enhance current skills, while providing an opportunity to gain work experience in a supportive work environment that builds confidence and gives participants an opportunity to explore other career options. Upon completion, participants will have acquired new skills, enhanced current skills, improve their soft-skills and be prepared for competitive public and private sector unsubsidized employment.

During the biennium, this program will place emphasis on family stability and the following strategic priorities:

- Reduce racial employment disparities
- Leverage strategic, purposeful partnerships
- Integrate the 4E success indicators – engagement, education, employment and employment retention into program
- Strengthen the WFS full family approach and family well-being measurement
- Leverage career pathway opportunities
- Increase WIOA and TANF program collaborations
- Increase staff skill development
- Pursue evaluation and continuous process improvement.

2. Explain the reasons for the increased administrative cost.

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions expects to exceed the 7.5% administrative cost cap. Additional administrative expenses will be incurred due to:

- 1) Use of consolidated fund dollars to continue the county-wide supported work experiences, targeting services for young parents and participants of African and American Indian descent;
- 2) Coordination and combination of unpaid work and paid work experiences and activities to maximize participant's employability.
- 3) Funds will be used to cover the cost of the planners and evaluators to conduct evaluation and reporting for supported work experience project along with costs to cover allocated accounting, grant administration, and program executive management personnel.

- 4) Supporting the provision of MIS and program technical guidance for the supported work experience, universal monitoring of program implementation, and ensure compliance with State and Federal rules and regulations related to the program.
- 5) Ramsey County continues to increase collaborative initiatives and programs between WIOA and MFIP/TANF, internal departments, colleges, Workforce Innovation Board and employers, thus increasing administrative expenses.

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

Contingent on funding, Ramsey County plans to implement a supported work program for up to 100 MFIP participants with a specific focus on young parents, African American, American Indian and Latino participants. Work experiences will be paid prevailing wage and may be up to 200 hours. The goal is to partner supported work experience placements with career exploration and education that will lead participant to secure better employment. As opportunities become available through grants and other funding, numbers served is anticipated to increase.

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

Unpaid work experience may be an option if the participant agrees to participate and/or the unpaid work experience meets following criteria:

- 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.
- The unpaid work experience provides specific skills or experience that cannot be obtained through other work activity options where the participant lives.
- The skills or experience result in higher wages than the participant would have been able to earn without the unpaid work experience.

Once the experience is completed, participants will get support for seeking unsubsidized work. All MFIP employment providers in Ramsey County have staff that function in roles that make connections with employers to secure placement of the participant into paid jobs and some have functioning employer advisory boards to provide advice and guidance to job development efforts.

### **Addendum for Unpaid Work Experience Activities**

If your county is providing unpaid work experience activities for MFIP participants and you don't already have an Injury Protection Plan (IPP) in place, please click on [eDocs](#) to find any IPP forms that may be needed. Email the completed form to: [Tria.chang@state.mn.us](mailto:Tria.chang@state.mn.us)

### **Provider Choice**

Does your county (select one):

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

Intend to submit a **financial hardship request**. See below.

## Financial Hardship Request

### FINANCIAL HARDSHIP - Exception to Choice of Employment Service Providers Requirement

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

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

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

1. If the county had a choice of providers in calendar year 2019, describe:
  - factors that have changed which indicate a financial hardship
  - why the hardship is expected to persist in the near future and
  - the magnitude of the hardship, which makes limiting delivery of employment services the best financial option for the county

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

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

Financial Hardship requests will be reviewed by The Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Employment and Economic (DEED) leadership. DH) and DEED will also review the amount budgeted by the

county for employment and training during calendar year 2021 and use this amount as a guide to determine whether the amount budgeted by the county for calendar year 2022 is reasonable.

If a financial hardship is approved, DHS and DEED will closely monitor county programs to ensure outcomes are achieved and services are being delivered consistent with state law. For additional info or if you have questions please email [Pamela McCauley](mailto:Pamela.McCauley@state.mn.us).

## H. Budget

Click on the link below to review your service area’s 2020 MFIP allocation and Federal Funding Sources:

[MFIP Consolidated Fund](#)

In the budget table below, indicate the amount and percentage for each item listed for the budget line items for calendar years 2022 - 2023 Also note:

- Refer the 2022-23 Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Biennial Service Agreement (BSA) Guidelines Bulletin section, “Allowable Services under MFIP Consolidated Fund.”
- Total percent must equal 100.
- MFIP administration is capped at 7.5 percent unless the county is approved for an administrative cap waiver. To apply for the administrative cap waiver, respond to the questions on Section G under Administrative Cap Waiver.
- The percentage of Employment Services DWP budget should be significantly less than, the Employment Services MFIP budget.
- Income maintenance administration is reasonable in comparison to the whole budget.
- Ensure the Emergency Assistance/Crisis Services plan is included if funds are allocated.
- If “other” is used, briefly state or describe the line item. “Other” expenditures include any costs that are not related to administering MFIP, DWP or Emergency program services or atypical costs. All services must be an allowable service under the MFIP Consolidated Fund.
- Email Brandon Riley at [brandon.riley@state.mn.us](mailto:brandon.riley@state.mn.us), if you need assistance or have questions with the budget section.

**Service Area:**

<b>2022 Budget (1/1/22 – 12/31/22) Budget Line Items</b>	<b>Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Employment Services (DWP)	1,216,947.00	5.97%
Employment Services (MFIP)	10,882,521.00	53.42%
Emergency Services/Crisis Fund	2,880,643.00	14.14%

Administration (cap at 7.5% for county and 15% for tribe and county with administrative cap waiver)	2,165,200.00	10.63%
Income Maintenance Administration	3,055,643.00	15.00%
Incentives (Include the total amount of funds budgeted for participant incentives but don't include support services here)	50,000.00	0.25%
Other 200% Services	120,000.00	0.59%
Capital Expenditures	-	0.00%
Other 1		
Other 2		
Total:	20,370,954.00	100.00%

<b>2023 Budget 12/31/23) Items (Estimated)</b>	<b>(1/1/23 – Budget Line</b>	<b>Budgeted Amount(Estimated)</b>	<b>Percent(Estimated)</b>
Employment Services (DWP)		1,216,947.00	5.97%
Employment Services (MFIP)		10,882,521.00	53.42%
Emergency Services/Crisis Fund		2,880,643.00	14.14%
Administration (cap at 7.5% for county and 15% for tribe and county with administrative cap waiver)		2,165,200.00	10.63%
Income Maintenance Administration		3,055,643.00	15.00%
Incentives (Include the total amount of funds budgeted for participant incentives but don't include support services here)		50,000.00	0.25%
Other 200% Services		120,000.00	0.59%
Capital Expenditures		-	0.00%
Other 1			
Other 2			
Total:		20,370,954.00	100.00%

## Certifications and Assurances

### PUBLIC INPUT

Prior to submission, did the county solicit public input for at least 30 days on the contents of the agreement?

No  Yes

Was public input received?  No  Yes

If received but not used, please explain.

### ASSURANCES

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

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

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

**Federal funds.** Payments are to be made from federal funds. If at any time such funds become unavailable, this Agreement shall be terminated immediately upon written notice of such fact by STATE to County. In the event of such termination, County shall be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for services satisfactorily performed.

- 1. Pass-through requirements.** County acknowledges that, if it is a subrecipient of federal funds under this Agreement, County may be subject to certain compliance obligations. County can view a table of these obligations in the [Health and Human Services Grants Policy Statement](#),<sup>1</sup> Exhibit 3 on page II-3. To the degree federal funds are used in this contract, STATE and County agree to comply with all pass-through requirements, including each Party's auditing requirements as stated in 2 C.F.R. § 200.332

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/grants/grants/policies-regulations/hhsgps107.pdf>

(Requirements for pass-through entities) and [2 C.F.R. §§ 200.501-521 \(Subpart F – Audit Requirements\)](#).<sup>2</sup> Counties (and all tiers of sub grantees) must comply with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Grant Guidance, Code of Federal Regulations, title 2, subtitle A, chapter II, part 200, as applicable (including modifications) in the administration of all DHS federally funded grants. [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl). General Terms and Conditions for the Administration of Children & Families awards can be found here: [General Terms and Conditions \(hhs.gov\)](#), and are incorporated into this agreement by reference. Terms and Conditions specific to TANF funds can be found here: [TANF Official Terms & Conditions for State and Territories \(April 2021\) \(hhs.gov\)](#), and are incorporated into this agreement by reference.

2. *County*: MN Dept of Human Services Ramsey (Must match the name associated with the DUNS number.)
3. *County's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number*: . The DUNS number is the nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities and must match GRANTEE's name.
4. *Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN)*: 2201MNTANF and 2301MNTANF
5. *Federal Award Date*: October 1, 2022 (projected) (The date of the award to the MN Dept. of Human Services.)
6. *Period of Performance*: Start date: **January 1, 2022**. End date: **December 31, 2023**.
7. Budget period start and end date: January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023
8. *Amount of federal funds*:
  - A. Total Amount Awarded to DHS for this project: \$103,290,000 (projected)
  - B. Total Amount Awarded by DHS for this project to county named above: See Budget Table in Section H of this Agreement.
9. *Federal Award Project description*: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
10. *Name*:
  - A. Federal Awarding Agency: Administration for Children and Families
  - B. MN Dept. of Human Services (DHS)
  - C. Contact information of DHS's awarding official: Jovon Perry, Jovon.perry@state.mn.us
10. *CFDA Number & Name*: Payments are to be made from federal funds obtained by STATE through Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) No. 93.558 (TANF)
11. Is this federal award related to research and development?:  Yes  No
12. Indirect Cost Rate for this federal award is: up to 15% (including if the *de minimis* rate is charged.)
13. Closeout terms and conditions for this federal award: County shall close-out its use of funds under this

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2018-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2018-title2-vol1-sec200-501.pdf>

agreement by complying with the closeout procedures in [2 C.F.R. § 200.343](#). County's obligations shall not end until all close-out requirements are completed. Terms specific to tangible personal property purchased with federal funds can be found here: [Property Guidance | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#)

**SERVICE AGREEMENT CERTIFICATION**

- Checking this box certifies that this 2020 - 2021 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement has been prepared as required and approved by the county board(s) under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, section 256J. In the box below, state the name of the chair of the county board of commissioners or authorized designee, their mailing address and the name of the county.

Name (chair or designee)	Mailing address	County

**If your county/tribal agency is unable to complete your BSA by October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 you will need to request an extension by clicking on the button below. Please provide additional information about why you were not able to compete this form.**

**DATE OF CERTIFICATION**

