

MFIP Employment Services MSTED Questions and Answers

1. **Q:** Can we have access to the MDRC PowerPoint?
A: MDRC PowerPoint has been emailed to Providers. MDRC PowerPoint can also be found on the provider webpage.
2. **Q:** It was stated that the agencies would be paying the cost of the translation. It can be costly, please clarify:
A: Yes, MFIP agencies will be responsible for the cost of translation services. Funds are available in the MFIP budgets to assist with this cost.

WFS is working in collaboration with MSTED agencies to develop language specific group orientations and workshops where we can use the services of one language specific interpreters. WFS will be responsible for the group orientation interpreting services. MFIP agencies will be responsible for individual one-one interpreting cost for a maximum of 8 hours. Interpreter cost may include MSTED intake, prepare for interviews, employer interview and follow-up. WFS will advise MFIP-ES when language specific MSTED services are available and how reimbursement will be made.

When referring individuals with limited English speaking skills to MSTED, please consider the English language level of that individual, suitability, jobs skills and their ability of to work at a place of employment without an interpreter. MSTED will not place a participant at an employer worksite that requires on-going interpreter services is needed.

3. **Q:** Can we get some clarification around the expectations of the Career/Employment Counselor and the MSTED teams regarding responsibility for providing support services?
A: All support services including work clothes, bus cards, and gas cards are provided by the MFIP ES agency, not the MSTED provider.
4. **Q:** The requirement of less than \$1200 earned in the last six months...how does that work in a two parent household? Is that less than \$1200 per person or per household? They asked because they have mostly two parent houses where one parent is working and making more than \$1200.
A: Income is based on the individual listed on the MSTED Eligibility List not the family. Upon receipt of the MSTED Eligibility List, counselors should assume that all individuals on the list are eligible. There is no need for MFIP ES to re-determine eligibility.
5. **Q:** What kinds of timelines/turn-around time should we expect between the day we send a referral to RC and RC passes it on to MSTED (either program)?
A: Planners will check the WS-STED mailbox daily and send referrals as they receive them to the MSTED agencies. However, please allow at least a 24 hours timeframe.
6. **Q:** We have many clients who are inactive then active, etc. from month to month. What does the first eligibility criteria mean specifically, "Have been on MFIP for the last six consecutive months"? Does it mean if a client has been inactive during that time, they aren't eligible?
A: MFIP agencies do not need to check or determine MSTED eligibility. DHS determines MSTED eligibility and notifies Ramsey County monthly as to who is eligible to participate in the MSTED program. MFIP providers are given a monthly MSTED list of individuals eligible to participate in the MSTED program. Please be assured that the individuals listed on the monthly MSTED list are

eligible to participate in the program. When referring to MSTED, please make sure you're using the most recent monthly referral list and the individuals referred are good fit and suitable for the program.

7. **Q:** "Currently in compliance with MFIP". If client is in sanction but is complying with a plan to get out of sanction, are they eligible? If a client has a NOITS out, are they eligible since they are not currently in sanction?
A: If a client is in sanction, in compliance with ES and the sanction is in the process of being cured, referrals to MSTED can be made. If a client has a NOITS and in compliance with the counselor, and expresses an interest in attending a MSTED Orientation, a referral can be made.
8. **Q:** EC makes referral before Sanction was imposed (after NOITS?), client went into Sanction before Orientation. Is the client eligible/appropriate?
A: Sanction and NOITS are not automatic disqualification. Client should be on their way to compliance and show evidence of compliance before a referral to the MSTED program is made. We know that there might be a good reason for someone to be referred to MSTED program regardless of sanction or NOITS status. Sanction or NOITS should probably be in the process of being cured and discussion needs to take place with the client about the MSTED program.
9. **Q:** Do MFIP agencies give out gift cards or do MSTED staff give out gift cards?
A: MSTED agencies will be responsible for the issuing of a one-time gift card to participants assigned to the Control Group. MSTED gift cards should not be confused with MFIP Support Services. MFIP Support services are provided by MFIP-ES providers.
10. **Q:** Should the EC refer clients who we already know are planning to quit all work activities in the near future? Explanation: Some ECs have clients with major life events in the near future that will force the client to stop/quit any work activity for several months. These events can be medical, family or personal – but the EC knows the client could start a job now but will have to quit working soon after. Should they refer the client to MSTED now or wait till that life event has been dealt with?
A: The counselor's role is to assess participant's suitability for the program if a counselor knows that something is going to prevent person from completing the MSTED program, the counselor **should not refer** a participant until the participant has addressed their issues and is work ready.
11. **Q:** If the client is 55+ months AND still somehow show up on the list, are they eligible?
A: Participants 55+ months shouldn't show up on the MSTED Eligibility List. If this occurs, please notify the planners immediately.
12. **Q:** Can MSTED agencies have more than one person assigned to the case?
A: MSTED agencies can assign up to two people to the WF1 case. Once the participant attends orientation, MSTED agencies will send an email to the referring MFIP counselor with name of the person who attended orientation and name(s) of the assigned MSTED worker(s). Upon receipt of the email, MFIP counselor assigns up to 2 MSTED worker(s) as a secondary team member to the WF1 case.
13. **Q:** How is MSTED going to communicate regarding the EC adding secondary MSTED staff to WF1?
A: The MSTED team will send an email to the referring MFIP Counselor who then can add secondary MSTED staff. Once assigned to the WF1 case, MSTED staff will be responsible for case noting and hourly tracking of MSTED pre-placement activities.
14. **Q:** If the client does not attend the Orientation as scheduled, does EC have to re-start the whole referral process through Ramsey County in order to re-schedule for the next Orientation?
A: MFIP counselors should connect with the client, assess the situation and simply re-schedule for the next Orientation if it's less than a month in the future without creating additional paperwork. But if the

client is to be re-scheduled for more than a month in the future or misses a 2nd Orientation, counselor should close local flag per policy & follow the referral process as outlined.

15. **Q:** Can YW support clients in finding their own Transitional a Work or Supported Work sites?
A: Yes, the YW and all MFIP-ES providers can assist their participants in finding transitional/subsidized employment opportunities. MFIP-ES providers must confer with MSTED agencies about the worksite before the participant is placed at the worksite. Also be reminded that the employer must agree to MSTED rules prior to placement and a worksite agreement must be signed by the employer. Please note, participants must be in the Treatment Group and not working at the worksite when the worksite agreement is developed.
16. **Q:** Will HIRED and G/WES issue a list (for marketing and recruiting) of types of positions and sample employers?
A: HIRED and GW/ES will share the types of employment opportunities available with MFIP ES during the visit with agencies. However, the goal of MSTED is to develop customized placement based on the person's skills, interests and abilities. It is very important for counselor to ensure that the participant has an employment goal and MSTED providers will try to place participant based on his/her goal.
17. **Q:** Work Opportunity Tax Credit: Can the employers use the tax credit while our participants are getting subsidized employment? Can they use it after supported employment when they are unsubsidized?
A: The employer may not use the Work Opportunity Tax Credit while the MSTED participant is getting a subsidy for their employment. The employer may only use the tax credit when they are paying 100% of the wages.
18. **Q:** If a participant is placed in a supported work placement and doesn't complete it, can we re-place them in another supported work placement, if appropriate? Since the focus of placement is building both the client's ability to be successful AND to give the employer time to train see progress can we re-start the experience based best interests of the participant (moving them to employment) assuming we have the budget to support it?
A: Yes, MSTED can re-place them in a new subsidized work experience, if appropriate, and the participant can have an additional 8 (or 16 weeks) of subsidized wages since it is a new employer - as long as it fits within the MSTED agency budget & doesn't adversely impact other client's access to an initial subsidized work experience.
19. **Q:** How long do MSTED need to provide retention services once a participant is placed in a subsidized placement?
A: MSTED agencies will provide retention supports until the participant has reached 90 days of unsubsidized employment.
20. **Q:** How should we interpret the new program policies? Is it better to keep the spirit of the 8 week rule (adapt around the holidays) or the letter of the 8 week rule (8 calendar weeks) – even if that may mean a delay in starting placement?
A: To clarify the 8 weeks rule, we are going to implement the number of weeks a client works however,
▪ If a participant is scheduled to work 24 hours a week, 3 days a week, that would be considered a full work week based on the client's schedule. If the participant's work hours happen to fall on a holiday, the client can make up the work hours that week.
▪ If a participant is scheduled to work subsidized employment, preferably at full-time (4 days or 5 days a week at 32-40 hours a week), that is considered a full work week. If the work hours happen to fall on a holiday, the participant can make up the work hours that week.

21. **Q:** With some programs, participants are able to concentrate wholly on the program and not engage in other activities (job search in particular) to make sure they meet hours requirements. Do you know if this is going to be true when participants are referred to the MSTED program?
- A:** If they are with the MSTED program they should only concentrate on MSTED activities and any other activities that the client and a counselor agreed upon and included in the EP after the client is assigned to the Treatment Group. Any additional activities have to be in support of MSTED activities and allow client time to ensure that she/he has ability to follow through with all interviews set by MSTED programs.
22. **Q:** If MFIP closes as a result of the MSTED income- does the participant continue with MSTED through a subsidy committed time frame?
- A:** Yes, the subsidy continues even if participants lose MFIP eligibility because of their earnings.
23. **Q:** IF MFIP closes as a result of move to a different County- does the participant continue with MSTED through a subsidy committed time frame?
- A:** Yes, if a participant is in a subsidized employment and moves to another county, that person may continue in to receive Ramsey County MSTED services. The new county will pick up supportive services.
24. **Q:** What happens if someone exited MFIP but is enrolled in MSTED Treatment Group and did not start a job?
- A:** It is not viable to have a STED provider work in a county in which they are not operating, so the current MSTED provider would no longer work with the participant. The participant is still in the treatment group.
- If someone moves from one STED county to another STED county, the new county should serve them.
 - If someone moves from a STED county to a non-STED County (i.e. St. Louis County) they would no longer receive STED services.
 - RC can help families who are compliant by proving support services up to 90 days after closure if needed. Counties can provide follow up services families up to 200% FPG.
25. **Q:** A MSTED participant in a structured subsidized work experience is asked or required by the employer to work on the holiday. All of the non MSTED employees are receiving holiday pay for the hours worked. Do we pay our MSTED participant holiday pay? If the employer ask or is requiring all employees to work overtime are we required to pay MSTED structure work experience or wage subsidy participant's overtime and who would be responsible for paying the overtime or holiday wages?
- A:** It would not be appropriate to have MSTED participants work during the holidays and overtime. There are a couple of concerns regarding the possibility that if MSTED participants are allowed to work overtime or during the holidays, an employer may require or unfairly ask the MSTED participant to work but may not ask their regular employees to work during these times. Another concern is that MSTED participants may not be required to work more than 40 hours per week under their EP and if they meet their participation hours they cannot be sanctioned for not working overtime.
26. **Q:** We have a potential contact for jobs at a casino and were wondering if there are restrictions or extra details/documentation needed around providing reimbursed wage subsidies to Native American tribes (as sovereign nations)?
- A:** No, we are not aware of any restrictions with MFIP participants working at casinos or additional documentation needed.