

# Leveling Up: Resetting MFIP Employment Services Performance Metrics in Hennepin County

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# Hennepin County MFIP

- Minnesota's version of TANF is the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). It is state administered and county operated.
- Hennepin County is the largest in Minnesota. In Hennepin, MFIP Employment Services are primarily contracted to Community-Based Organizations.
- Currently, we fund 10 nonprofits who provide the majority of MFIP Employment Services to around 13,000 participants per year.
- Three other additional providers offer parallel services to individuals who are eligible for a state-funded track of the program.



# Contracting

- Contracts with nonprofit agencies are typically granted in three-year cycles but renewed each year.
- In 2021, we released an RFP for MFIP Employment Services which provided an opportunity to redesign key elements of our program, including performance metrics.
- Hennepin County provides programmatic oversight, technical assistance, program monitoring, and training opportunities to Employment Services Providers (ESPs).

# Program Goals and Approach

1. Emphasize the importance of employment and successful program exits due to earned income.
2. Build racial equity in education and employment rates among MFIP participants.
  - According to demographic data from our previous contract cycle, more than 75% of residents engaged in MFIP Employment Services in Hennepin County were Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).
3. Support the long-term economic self-sufficiency of families to reduce the likelihood of returning to the program.
  - This requires us to think differently about the program. Moving from transactional services to transformational experiences.

To support the program's goals, our service delivery model emphasizes barrier reduction and comprehensive, person-centered case management.



# Rethinking Performance Metrics

- Performance metrics from the previous contract cycle sent mixed messages (TANF WPR vs. Minnesota DHS' Self-Support Index)
- Outcomes and outputs were discussed interchangeably, leading to confusion about priorities.
- Several indicators, including those that focused on racial disparities were ambiguous, with undefined targets or methods of tracking.
- During 2020 and 2021, in the height of the pandemic, performance measurement took a back seat to more pressing concerns. Data quality and reporting accountability were de-emphasized.

# Priorities for new Performance Metrics

- Clearly defined procedures for how to run reports to ensure consistency of results across all providers.
- Targets that are based on program results versus conjecture. Using 2022 as a baseline year to gather data from new metrics before setting targets in 2023.
- Trackable using data available to providers via the program's default database (Workforce One).
- Disaggregating metrics by race in order to clearly identify disparities in the program, before endeavoring to address them.

# Outcomes

Indicator	Target	Description
<b>Self-Support Index</b>	62%	<p>Participants who are no longer receiving MFIP cash assistance or who are working at least 30 hours per week three years later.</p> <p>This state-run report is provided by the County to Providers on a quarterly basis. No tracking is required by the ESP. See more information <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<b>Unsubsidized Employment Exits*</b>	40%	<p>Number of Participants exiting from MFIP due to earned income above <a href="#">MFIP income limits</a>.</p> <p>The data for this indicator are tracked by the ESP using Workforce One.</p>
<b>Job Retention*</b>	(Network wide performance from January – September 2022 will be used as a baseline to determine target for 2023 and 2024 program years.)	<p>Enrolled participants still employed in the same job 90 days after employment start date.</p> <p>The data for this indicator are tracked by the ESP using Workforce One.</p>
<b>Education Skill Gain*</b>	(Network wide performance from January – September 2022 will be used as a baseline to determine target for 2023 and 2024 program years.)	<p>Number of participants who successfully complete Education/Training activities including GED attainment/ESL level increase/credential attainment/college degree.</p> <p>The data for this indicator are tracked by the ESP using Workforce One.</p>

# Outputs

Indicator	Target	Description
<b>Baseline Engagement*</b>	80%	<p>Percentage of all enrolled participants with at least 3 activity hours logged each month.</p> <p>The data for indicator are partially tracked by the ESP using Workforce One and partially tracked by the Eligibility Worker in MAXIS. ESP pulls this report from Workforce One.</p>
<b>Median Engagement*</b>	(Network wide performance from January – September 2022 will be used as a baseline to determine target for 2023 and 2024 program years.)	<p>Median monthly engagement level among participants as measured by activity hours.</p> <p>The data for this indicator are partially tracked by the ESP using Workforce One and partially tracked by the Eligibility Worker in MAXIS. ESP pulls this report from Workforce One.</p>
<b>Education/Training Activities*</b>	(Network wide performance from January – September 2022 will be used as a baseline to determine target for 2023 and 2024 program years.)	<p>Percentage of enrolled participants participating in education and/or training activities.</p> <p>The data for this indicator are tracked by the ESP using Workforce One.</p>
<b>Full-Time Employment*</b>	(Network wide performance from January – September 2022 will be used as a baseline to determine target for 2023 and 2024 program years.)	<p>Percentage of enrolled participants employed full-time (30 hours or more per week).</p> <p>The data for this indicator are tracked by the ESP using Workforce One.</p>



# Inputs

Inputs	Target	Description
<b>Support Services Funding</b>	10%	Percent of total budget NTE funds spent annually on participant <a href="#">Support Services</a> .
<b>Participant Feedback Collection</b>	At least once per quarter	Participant feedback collection. This could be in the form of a focus group, one on one interviews, short survey, etc.
<b>Exit Surveys</b>	25%	Number of Hennepin County exit surveys about participant experience administered out of total number of annual exits.
<b>Continuous Program Improvement</b>	3 new or enhanced MFIP program components annually	<p>Development of new or enhanced MFIP program components designed to support improved outcomes.</p> <p>Examples: participant classes, workshops, or groups; development of official employer partnerships; addition of support staff or creation of a new role; implementation of new curriculum or training materials, etc.</p>

# Implementation

- Leaning into the learning curve and the time it takes to make meaningful changes. We've created the ESP dashboard that represents progress towards key components in case management that ultimately support outcomes.
- Developed detailed reporting guides to obtain data for quarterly reports and monthly dashboards to emphasize the importance of consistent and accurate results.
- Hosted one on one technical assistance sessions with each provider before Q1 and Q2 reports were due to walk through each metric and the reporting guide instructions for each.
- Requested support from MN DEED to combine required data components from existing reports to create a new report to meet our needs.
- Staying nimble and adjusting as we go: waiting for the final pieces to arrive at data disaggregation, pulling median engagement on behalf of our providers, and identifying needs to adjust procedures.
- Ongoing emphasis on the importance of reporting accurate data during the baseline year. There is no benefit in inflated outcomes that are not accurate.



# Next Steps

- Update the reporting guides to support providers in as they disaggregate data and make adjustments for items we've learned along the way.
- Support providers with additional training for reporting and data analysis.
- Retroactively retrieve disaggregated race data for the full network once the required report to do so is available.
- Complete an annual report reflecting the year's learnings.
- Evaluate the data as a whole and set target outcomes as we move into 2023.
- Continue to build clear resources and policies that provide historical context as future decisions in program delivery are made. A priority in developing materials that weather turnover.

Thank You

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