
Sponsor: Workforce Solutions

Meeting Date: 11/9/2021

Title: Minnesota Family Investment Program Biennial Service Agreement for 2022-2023

File Number: 2021-593

Background and Rationale:

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions administers the Employment Services portion of the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) through the state's Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and Diversionary Work Program (DWP). Employment services are provided directly by Workforce Solutions staff as well as by contracted providers. Emergency and Crisis Services are provided directly by Ramsey County's Health & Wellness Service Team.

Minnesota Statutes Section 256J.626, subdivision 4(a), requires counties and nation/tribes to have a Biennial Service Agreement (BSA) approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) in order to receive TANF Block Grant Consolidated Funds (Consolidated Funds). The purpose of the BSA is to provide DHS with information about services and strategies intended to meet program measures with the goal of increasing the economic stability of low-income families. The different sections of the BSA gather information about program strengths and service delivery gaps. The BSA will give DHS a comprehensive assessment of current efforts, insight into what types of assistance is needed, and information on strategies to better serve participants in obtaining and sustaining gainful employment that will ultimately lead to greater self-sufficiency.

MFIP is a comprehensive work-focused program in which participants are encouraged and expected to work. In preparation for work, and/or retaining employment, participants are required to engage in MFIP approved work activities.

DWP is a short term (fourth month) work-focused program that helps parents quickly find work so that they do not need to go on MFIP.

The Consolidated Funds will provide funding for the following services, as further described in the BSA:

- Diversionary Work Program
- MFIP Employment Services Program
- Extension work-focused services Program, post 60-month MFIP
- Emergency and Crisis Services
- Family Stabilization Employment Services
- Support Services
- Unpaid work experience/Transitional work experience
- Career coaching and trainings
- Guided self-determination skill building and executive skill building for participants
- Reducing racial disparities efforts (Partners for Equity special projects) and increasing meaningful efforts towards authentic community engagement
- Incorporation of lifelong learning initiative and motivational interviewing

Minnesota Statutes Section 256J.626, subdivision 4(d) requires that counties or nation/tribes must allow a period of no less than 30 days for public comments on the contents of the BSA. The

proposed BSA was posted on several Ramsey County website locations on September 15, 2021. No verbal or written comments were received by the deadline of October 14, 2021.

The 2022-2023 BSA is due to DHS by October 15, 2021; however, Workforce Solutions received an extension from DHS to submit the BSA upon the approval of Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. Upon DHS approval of the BSA, Workforce Solutions will receive the Consolidated Funds allocation estimated at \$20,370,954 annually for 2022 and 2023. The potential exists for additional funding to be received; for example, MFIP/TANF supplemental funds, consolidated work experience funds, and MFIP/TANF funds targeted for racial disparity reduction or innovations.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the submission of an application to the Minnesota Department of Human Services for the 2022-2023 Minnesota Family Investment Program Biennial Service Agreement Grant in an amount of \$20,370,954.
2. Authorize the acceptance and expenditure of grant awarded funds from the Minnesota Department of Human Services for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant for the period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023.
3. Authorize the County Manager to apply for and accept additional Grant funds from the Minnesota Department of Human Services for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2023.
4. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and contracts and execute amendments to agreements and contracts in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of the grant funding.
5. Authorize the County Manager to make temporary transfers, as needed, from the County General Fund to Workforce Solutions to cover program expenses until program funds are received, with repayment to be made upon receipt of the funds.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner McDonough, seconded by Commissioner MatasCastillo.

Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Carter, Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, and Reinhardt

By: 
Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board