



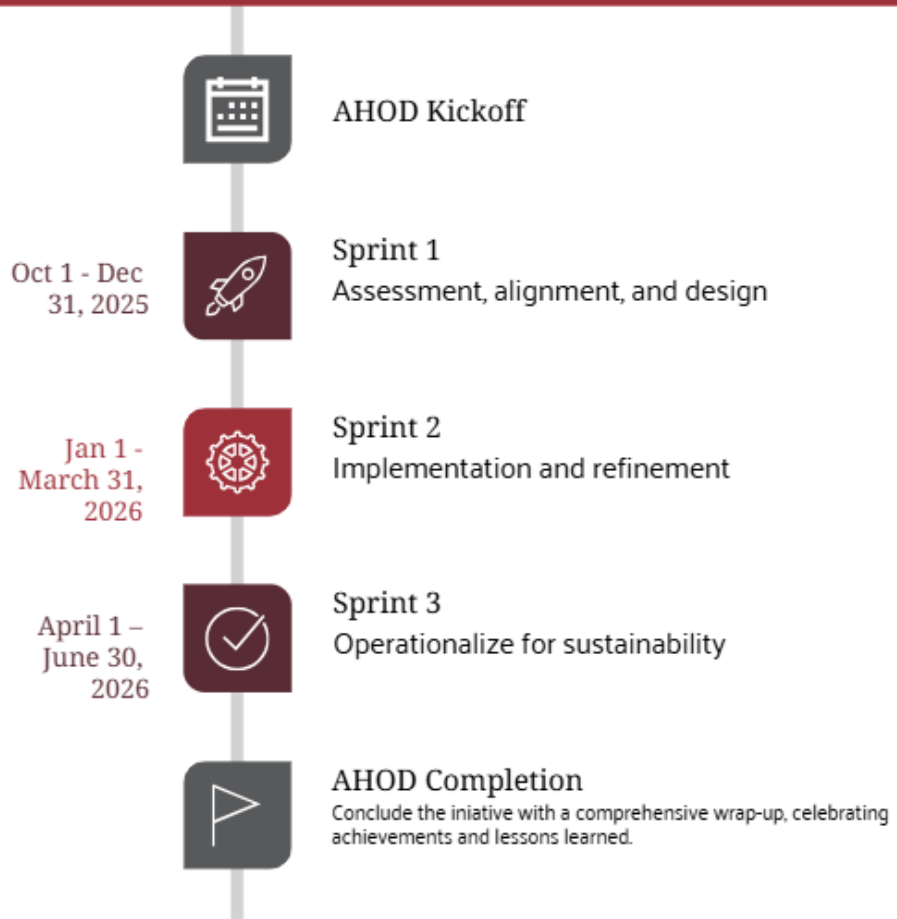
All Hands on Deck Access & Accuracy

Ramsey County Board of Commissioners Workshop

04/28/2026

- **Introduction to All Hands on Deck Access & Accuracy.**
Deputy County Manager Karen Francois, Community Services & Supports
- **Access & Accuracy overview, risks and H.R. 1 impacts.**
Director Ali Ali, Financial Assistance Services
- **Access & Accuracy highlights and state collaborations.**
Deputy Director Jason Hedin, Financial Assistance Services
- **Strategic priority alignment.**
Director Ali Ali, Financial Assistance Services
- **Time for questions.**
All Attendees

All Hands on Deck Access & Accuracy



All Hands on Deck (AHOD) Current Critical Issue: Accuracy & Timeliness in Public Benefit Determinations

- Focus on getting food, health care, and cash assistance right and on time.
- Delays or inaccuracies can negatively impact residents who rely on these benefits and may have downstream financial implications.

Ensuring residents receive *the right benefits, at the right time, every time.*

Building on past AHOD: What we learned and carried forward



Early intervention improves outcomes.



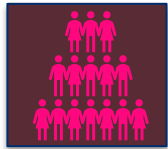
Clear goals enable faster, more consistent execution.



Data is critical to sustain improvements.



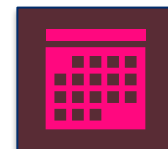
Improving communication reduces demand and improves resident experience.



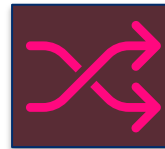
Cross team collaboration drives results.



Standardization improves both accuracy and efficiency.



Short-term sprints must connect to long-term operational change.



Sustainable improvement requires process and technology.



Access & Accuracy Program Goals

- Achieve a measurable reduction in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Payment Error Rate.
- Process at least 95% of SNAP cases on time.
- Increase resident trust in SNAP through prompt case processing and effective communication.
- Fully embed accuracy improvements into FAS operations.
- Strengthen Ramsey County's leadership role regionally.



Program Risks for mitigation

- Variability in SNAP accuracy interpretation across reviewers.
- Lacking recent statewide error rate and timeliness data to assess improvements and progress.
- Federal expectations that exceed local operational capacity.
- Application processing timeliness as workload and administrative demands increase.
- Potential agency financial exposure tied to accuracy performance as a result of H.R.1.



Policy Changes

- Expanded SNAP work requirements for adults ages 18 to 64.
- Reduced exemptions for veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and youth leaving foster care.
- Restrictions on certain legal non-citizen eligibility categories.
- Limits on how utility assistance and household expenses can be considered in benefit calculations.



Financial and Administrative Changes

- Federal reimbursement for SNAP administration reduced from 50% to 25% beginning October 1, 2026.
 - States must cover 75% of program administration costs.
- New state cost-sharing for SNAP benefits tied to Payment Error Rate (PER) beginning October 1, 2027.

Operational Considerations for Counties

- Increased verification and eligibility determination requirements.
- Higher financial exposure tied to program error rates.
- Increased administrative workload for counties administering SNAP.
- Many of the changes need to be conducted manually, such as hand calculations outside of the state system, because systems have not been updated.

All Hands on Deck: Highlights & State Collaboration

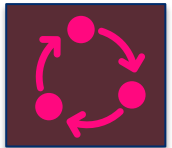
What we are doing



Re-establish the Quality Assurance (QA) Team.



Quality Tracking tool development in collaboration with Information Services.



Create Quality Assurance team to Training team feedback loop.

Why it matters



Consistency

Standardizes policy application.



Visibility

Identifies and tracks error trends.



Alignment

Drives targeted training improvements.



Risk Reduction

Supports compliance and performance.

What has been completed



Launched a dedicated Expedited SNAP Screening team in November 2025.



Screened Expedited SNAP applications & interview timeliness improve.



This allows staff to connect with residents earlier reducing delays at the front end of the process.

Impact

Timeliness Improvement

8% to 40%



Achievement

32% Improvement



Reporting Period

Q4 2025



Good afternoon.

I wanted to take a moment to recognize you and your teams for the increased APT rates for expedited SNAP applications.

You shared in the meeting on Monday that you implemented a new expedited intake team in November and the numbers show!! I attached a quick comparison sheet for you to see the data.

This improvement reflects the hard work, focus, and coordination across your teams to ensure timely support for those who need it most. Expedited SNAP processing is critical for vulnerable households, and the progress you've made truly makes a difference.

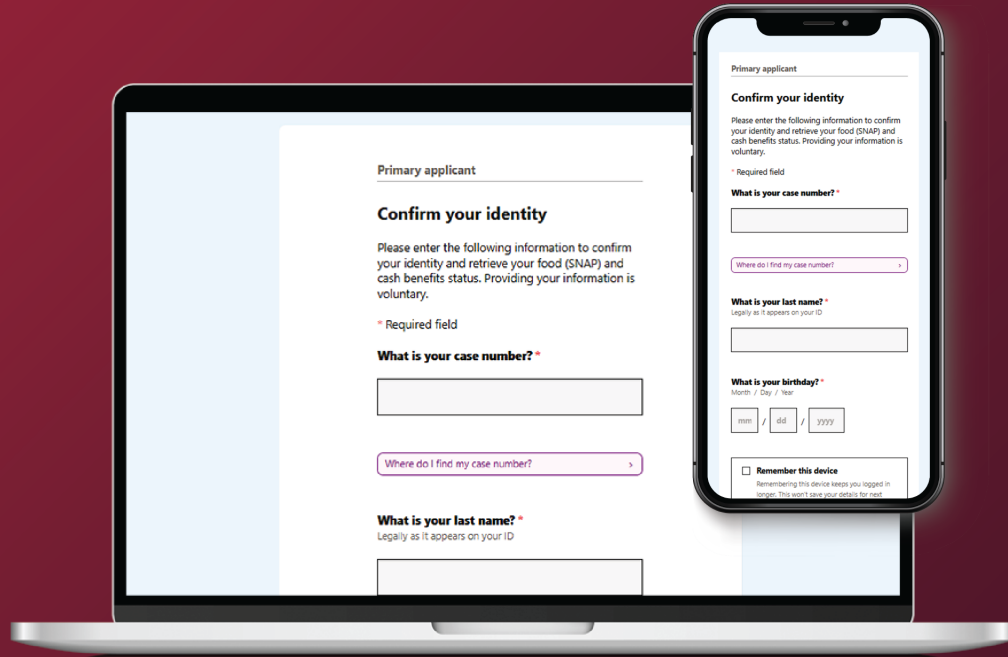
Our team member who answers calls for the SNAP hotline also shared she has received less calls, from Ramsey county clients, regarding expedited!!

Please extend my appreciation to everyone involved. Thank you for your continued commitment and dedication.

Quality Assurance and Accountability Section, EAESD

Skip the Phone Call.

**Track the status of your SNAP
and Cash Benefits Online.**



Use the Case Status Tracker to learn more about your application and benefits today.

Improving Access & Transparency

Residents can securely check their case status online, at any time.

- Immediate access to case status details.
- Reduced need to call by phone.
- Faster access to information for residents.



Find the Case
Status Tracker at
mnbenefits.mn.gov/status



SNAP Forward is an effort led by the state to modernize and streamline SNAP application processing to fix root causes of:

- **Delays.**
- **Errors.**
- **Manual work.**
- **Inconsistent processes.**

Upcoming Improvements

- Automating application content received via MNbenefits to MAXIS to eliminate data entry.
- Streamlining interview scheduling and notices.
- Implementing a guided SNAP interview tool.
- Creating a real-time client communication feed.

What we are doing



Furthering partner engagement through quarterly newsletter and feedback loops.



Expanding self-service tools to provide real-time updates.



Positioning Ramsey County as an active regional partner and voice in advancing shared solutions.

What this is improving

- More consistent and transparent communication.
- Stronger relationships with community partners.
- Decreased volume of constituent inquiries.
- Improved resident access to timely information.

Resident-Centered Holistic Support

- Improves access to benefits and service navigation.
- Case Status Tracker increases transparency for residents.

Operational Excellence

- Improves timeliness and processing performance.
- Reduces administrative burden through process and technology improvements.

Racial & Health Equity & Shared Community Power

- Reduces disparities in access and outcomes through consistent policy application.
- Improves equitable access to benefits.

Intergenerational Wealth & Economic Justice

- Ensures timely and accurate benefits that support household stability.
- Reduces disruptions in food and financial support.

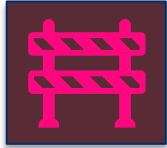
Access & Accuracy is how the county operationalizes its strategic priorities through better service delivery, stronger outcomes, and reduced risk.

Q & A

Appendix

All Hands on Deck Additional Updates

What has been completed



Conducted detailed analysis of barriers impacting processing timelines.



Reviewed SNAP intake cases to identify improvement opportunities in collaboration with the state.



Targeted training and improved use of available reporting.

Impact

Timeliness Improvement
68% to 75%



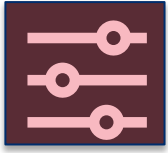
Achievement
7% Improvement



Reporting Period
Q4 2025



What is advancing next



Streamline intake assignment process.



Reduce manual steps that delay processing.



Staff capacity to sustain and scale improvements.

Why it matters



Protect timeliness as demand increases.



Supports consistent and efficient processing.



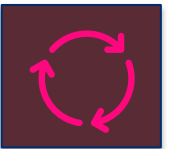
Strengthens ability to deliver timely and accurate benefits.

These next steps ensure improvements are sustained and scaled to meet growing demand.

What we are doing



Collaborating with Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative (MnCCC) to provide a shared data and reporting platform.



Automating data preparation and operational report delivery.



Creating a modern, centralized foundation for Ramsey County reporting and information needs.

Why it matters



Consistency

Standardizes state data for county use.



Visibility & Alignment

Supports accessibility and collaboration.



Risk Reduction

Supports compliance and quality monitoring.



Timeliness

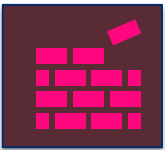
Strengthens ability to deliver timely and accurate benefits.

Operational efficiency as One Ramsey County.

What has been completed



Designed standard reporting in collaboration with 12 pilot counties.



Built first Ramsey County centralized data and reporting framework.



Completed MN County Attorney Association approved State Department of Human Services (DHS) Warehouse data sharing agreement.

Next steps

April - May 2026

Install, test, and train users on when and how to use solution.

May - June 2026

DHS Warehouse/iCounty view report delivery

June 2026

Production Go Live with IS and Business support model.



Call Center Modernization for Financial Assistance Services

What has been completed

- Confirmed vendor capability through existing master contract.
- Validated technology feasibility with current phone system.

What we are doing now

- Designing network architecture and system integration.
- Finalizing vendor requirements for technical development, pricing and timeline for execution.

What this will accomplish

- Automated call responses using data-driven text-to-speech.
- Integrated agent dashboard with information from multiple systems for resident caller.
- Faster response times and reduced need for manual lookups.
- Provides a single, easy-to-use phone number for residents to access benefit information and support.
 - Replaces EZ Info.
 - Enhances benefit information that is available by phone 24/7.
 - Provides call center agent quality monitoring and coaching capabilities.

