

NUMBER

#19-85-02

DATE

December 16, 2019

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Tribal Nation Directors

County Financial Supervisors
and Staff

Employment Service Providers

Tribal Nation Representatives

ACTION/DUE DATEPlease read information and
prepare for implementation**EXPIRATION DATE**

December 16, 2021

Cash Grant Increase

TOPIC

Cash grant increase for the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Diversionary Work Program (DWP), and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA).

PURPOSE

Policy and procedural guidance to counties and tribes regarding the legislative change to increase the cash assistance portion of the MFIP transitional standard.

CONTACT

Policy questions related to this bulletin should be directed to PolicyQuest.

SIGNED

LISA BAYLEY
Interim Assistant Commissioner
Children and Family Services

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

I. Background

In 2019, Governor Walz proposed and the legislature passed an increase to the cash assistance portion of the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) transitional standard used by MFIP, Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Diversionary Work Program (DWP), and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) effective February 1, 2020.

Minnesota Family Investment Program & Tribal TANF

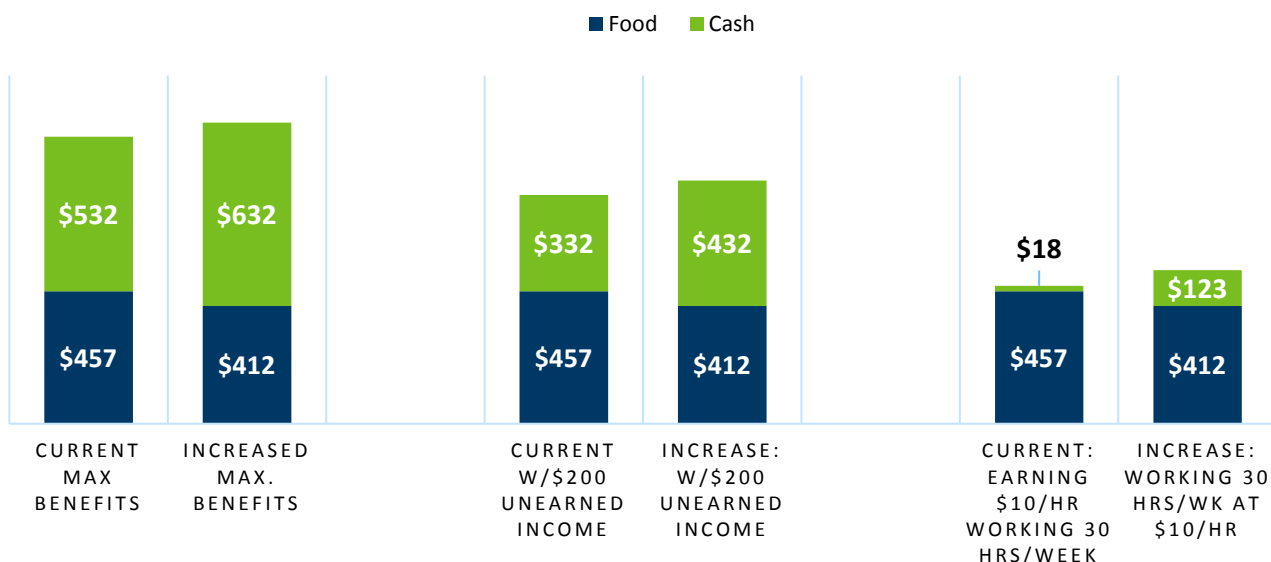
The maximum cash assistance grant for families on MFIP and Tribal TANF will increase by \$100 for each family size. However, not every family will receive a \$100 increase in their monthly cash benefits if they have outside income. When families have outside income – such as earnings from a job or child support payments – they do not receive the full cash and food grant. MFIP and Tribal TANF benefits are designed to decrease as outside income increases. Due to the legislative change, most families will see an increase in their cash grant even if they are not receiving the \$100 maximum increase.

Federal law requires that when there is an increase in income, the amount of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits a family receives decreases. Because Minnesota has a waiver from the U.S.

Department of Agriculture to combine cash and food benefits for MFIP, the food portion of the MFIP grant is determined with a standard formula, instead of a case-by-case determination usually done for SNAP benefits. The food portion of the transitional standard will be reduced according to a formula approved by Food and Nutrition Services which oversees SNAP at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The table below shows examples of how the cash grant increase effective February 1, 2020 will impact a family of 3 with varying income amounts and sources on MFIP. For each example, the current grant is compared to the new grant amount.

EXAMPLES FOR AN MFIP FAMILY OF 3



Diversionsary Work Program and Refugee Cash Assistance

The DWP and RCA grants will increase because both programs follow the cash portion of the MFIP transitional standard. The maximum cash assistance grant for DWP and RCA will increase by \$100 for each family size. As with MFIP, when families have outside income – such as earnings from a job or child support payments – they will not receive the maximum benefit. Because of this, not every DWP or RCA household will receive a \$100 increase in their monthly cash benefits.

The SNAP benefits received by DWP and RCA households will also be impacted by the increase in the cash grant amounts. Federal law requires that an increase in cash benefits reduces the amount of SNAP benefits a household receives. The reduction in SNAP benefits for DWP and RCA households will depend on each family's size, income, shelter costs, utility costs, and other factors.

See Attachment A for the table of new Transitional and Family Wage Level Standards.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Impact

The cash grant increase will increase a Child Care Assistance Program family's income. When the family's income increases, and their income does not exceed 85 percent state median income (SMI), there is no impact on the family's benefits until their next redetermination. The family's copayment cannot increase during the 12 month eligibility period. The family's copayment may increase at their next redetermination.

II. System Implementation

- A. In late December, 2019, the Transitional Standard, Family Wage Level, and Deemer tables will be updated with the new cash grant amounts effective February 1, 2020 (2/20).
- B. Approvals for 2/20 MFIP, Tribal TANF, DWP, RCA and SNAP programs completed on or after January 1, 2020, will include the grant increase and resulting notices will include specific text regarding the cash increase.
- C. In early January 2020, MAXIS will identify all active MFIP, Tribal TANF, DWP, RCA and SNAP cases impacted by this grant increase.

As programmed, MAXIS will auto-approve existing active MFIP, Tribal TANF and DWP cases. DAILs will be issued if a case cannot be auto-approved or if an approval is completed but certain conditions exist on the case.

Reasons the cases will not be auto-approved, but DAIL will be issued:

- Recertification or Household Report Form is due for 2/20
- MFIP or DWP is in pending or REIN status
- MFIP results will be suspended in 2/20
- MFIP or DWP grant has vendor authorization in place
- MFIP or DWP results show a decrease in grant amount
- Previous MFIP or DWP approved version includes New Spouse Income (NSI), but 2/20 is not within the NSI 12 month period

Reasons DAIL will be issued on cases that are auto-approved:

- MFIP or DWP grant increased more than \$100
- An MFIP sanction is in place for 2/20
- New MFIP or DWP household member has been added but not yet approved
- MFIP or DWP household member has been removed but not yet approved

For a list of DAILs, see Attachment B.

- D. RCA cases with and without SNAP: Workers will be notified by the RCA coordinator at DHS via phone and email to approve 2/2020 eligibility.
- E. SNAP cases with DWP grants in budget: Workers will receive a DAIL message for each of the impacted cases and will need to take necessary actions to approve new 2/20 eligibility.
- F. There is no change to the functionality of the interface between MEC² and MAXIS. CCAP cases with MFIP, DWP or RCA will receive new child care assistance results when a new MAXIS approval is done with the grant increase. Please review the results and take action as needed.

III. References

Minnesota Statutes, section 256J.24, subdivision 5

Combined Manual, MFIP/DWP Assistance Standards (0020.09)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 431-4049 (voice) or toll free at (800) 657-3739, or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.

Attachment A

MFIP Assistance Standards

Effective February 1, 2020

MFIP Unit	Family Wage Level	Transitional Standard		
Eligible People	Standard	Full Standard	Cash Portion	Food Portion
1	\$ 557	\$ 506	\$ 350	\$ 156
2	905	823	537	286
3	1,148	1,044	632	412
4	1,372	1,247	721	526
5	1,571	1,428	797	631
6	1,804	1,640	873	767
7	1,960	1,782	950	832
8	2,159	1,963	1,016	947
9	2,356	2,142	1,080	1,062
10	2,547	2,315	1,135	1,180
Each Additional Person	189	172	53	119

Attachment B

DAIL messages for MFIP, Tribal TANF and DWP cases

The following DAIL messages will be issued on MFIP, Tribal TANF and DWP cases when the special mass change batch job is run in January 2020 for February benefits. PF12 help is available on each of these DAIL messages. No DAIL messages will be issued for RCA or SNAP only cases.

MFIP/Tribal TANF not approved:

- ME92: MFIP MASS CHANGE NOT AUTO-APPROVED*
- ME98: CASE NOT AUTO-APPROVED HRF/SR/RECERT DUE*
- MEBE: MFIP NSI CASE NOT AUTO-APPROVED*

MFIP/Tribal TANF approved, but case review needed:

- ME93: MFIP MASS CHANGE AUTO-APPROVED AN UNUSUAL INCREASE. REVIEW ELIG RESULTS*
- MEX1: MFIP MASS CHANGE AUTO-APPROVED CASE WITH SANCTION. REVIEW ELIG RESULTS*
- MEA5: MFIP MASS CHANGE EXCLUDED NEW HH MEMBER, REVIEW ELIG RESULTS*
- MEA7: MFIP MASS CHANGE INCLUDED A REMOVED HH MEMBER, REVIEW ELIG*

DWP not approved:

- MEA3: DWP MASS CHANGE NOT AUTO-APPROVED*
- MEBF: DWP NSI CASE NOT AUTO-APPROVED*

DWP processed, SNAP approval needed:

- MEBG: REVIEW PA GRANT AMT IN SNAP BUDGET AND COMPLETE NEW APPROVAL.*

DWP approved, but case review needed:

- MEA2: DWP MASS CHANGE AUTO-APPROVED AN UNUSUAL INCREASE. REVIEW ELIG RESULTS*
- MEA4: DWP MASS CHANGE EXCLUDED NEW HH MEMBER, REVIEW ELIG RESULTS*
- MEA6: DWP MASS CHANGE INCLUDED A REMOVED HH MEMBER, REVIEW ELIG RESULTS*