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## **More than \$23 million improves child protection services** *Funding for county workers tied to more child visits*

Minnesota counties and tribes are now receiving the first of more than \$23.35 million in new state funding to hire more than 300 workers and improve child protection services. The funding will be allocated annually, is tied to performance measures and must be used for additional staff or to expand child protection services.

The additional funding was appropriated by the 2015 Legislature based on final recommendations made by Gov. Mark Dayton's [Task Force on the Protection of Children](#).

"The abuse of any child in Minnesota, is one child too many. This new funding will help enhance the safety of our children, by hiring an additional 300 qualified child protection workers across Minnesota," Gov. Dayton said. "I thank the Legislature and Child Protection Task Force for their efforts, which have made needed improvements to our child protection systems."

Human Services Commissioner Lucinda Jesson said the additional staff will give workers more time to keep up with their caseloads and support children in need of protection. This includes more timely visits with children who may be victims of abuse and those in foster care.

"Along with reducing worker caseloads, the funding will help us provide greater consistency in child protection services statewide and improve outcomes for children," said Jesson, who served as co-chair of the task force.

The counties will receive 80 percent of the first year funding, which totals \$18.68 million, from the Department of Human Services in July and the remainder in February 2016, provided they meet two performance requirements for face-to-face visits. The first is with alleged child victims whose reports of abuse are accepted, or screened in, for follow-up by workers. The second is for monthly visits with children in foster care. Both have a 90 percent threshold. If a county doesn't meet the requirement, the money will be redistributed among those that do.

The \$23.35 million will be distributed to counties for State Fiscal Year 2016 under a formula that considers child population, screened-in child abuse reports and open child protection cases. The largest share, \$5.45 million is allocated to Hennepin County; Ramsey County is set to receive \$2 million. All counties will receive at least \$75,000. The White Earth and Leech Lake Bands of

Ojibwe will each also receive \$75,000. An additional \$1.5 million to address child welfare disparities will be awarded through a request for proposal process.

More information about the funding, performance measures and expected staffing are in a [DHS bulletin](#).

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