

# **Streamlining Eligibility for Public Programs**

## **Minnesota Session Laws, 2011, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session**

### **Chapter 9, Article 9, Sections 14-17**

#### **Sec. 14. COUNTY ELECTRONIC VERIFICATION PROCEDURES.**

The commissioner of human services shall define which public assistance program requirements may be electronically verified for the purposes of determining eligibility, and shall also define procedures for electronic verification. The commissioner of human services shall report back to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over these issues by January 15, 2012, with draft legislation to implement the procedures if legislation is necessary for purposes of implementation.

#### **Sec. 15. ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES.**

The commissioner of human services, in consultation with counties and other key stakeholders, shall analyze and develop recommendations to align program policy and procedures across all public assistance programs to simplify and streamline program eligibility and access. The commissioner shall report back to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over these issues by January 15, 2013, with draft legislation to implement the recommendations.

#### **Sec. 16. ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR CERTAIN REDETERMINATIONS.**

The commissioner of human services shall develop and implement by July 15, 2012, a simplified process to redetermine eligibility for recipient populations in the medical assistance, Minnesota supplemental aid, food support, and group residential housing programs who are eligible based upon disability or age, and who are expected to experience minimal change in income or assets from month to month. The commissioner shall apply for any federal waivers needed to implement this section.

#### **Sec. 17. SIMPLIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT PROCESS.**

(a) The commissioner of human services shall issue a request for information for an integrated service delivery system for health care programs, food support, cash assistance, and child care. The commissioner shall determine, in consultation with partners in paragraph (c), if the products meet departments' and counties' functions. The request for information may incorporate a performance-based vendor financing option in which the vendor shares the risk of the project's success. The health care system must be developed in phases with the capacity to integrate food support, cash assistance, and child care programs as funds are available. The request for information must require that the system:

- (1) streamline eligibility determinations and case processing to support statewide eligibility processing;
- (2) enable interested persons to determine eligibility for each program, and to apply for programs online in a manner that the applicant will be asked only those questions relevant to the programs for which the person is applying;
- (3) leverage technology that has been operational in other state environments with similar requirements; and

(4) include Web-based application, worker application processing support, and the opportunity for expansion.

(b) The commissioner shall issue a final report, including the implementation plan, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over health and human services no later than January 31, 2012.

(c) The commissioner shall partner with counties, a service delivery authority established under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 402A, the Office of Enterprise Technology, other state agencies, and service partners to develop an integrated service delivery framework, which will simplify and streamline human services eligibility and enrollment processes. The primary objectives for the simplification effort include significantly improved eligibility processing productivity resulting in reduced time for eligibility determination and enrollment, increased customer service for applicants and recipients of services, increased program integrity, and greater administrative flexibility.

(d) The commissioner, along with a county representative appointed by the Association of Minnesota Counties, shall report specific implementation progress to the legislature annually beginning May 15, 2012.

(e) The commissioner shall work with the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators and the Office of Enterprise Technology to develop collaborative task forces, as necessary, to support implementation of the service delivery components under this paragraph. The commissioner must evaluate, develop, and include as part of the integrated eligibility and enrollment service delivery framework, the following minimum components:

(1) screening tools for applicants to determine potential eligibility as part of an online application process;

(2) the capacity to use databases to electronically verify application and renewal data as required by law;

(3) online accounts accessible by applicants and enrollees;

(4) an interactive voice response system, available statewide, that provides case information for applicants, enrollees, and authorized third parties;

(5) an electronic document management system that provides electronic transfer of all documents required for eligibility and enrollment processes; and

(6) a centralized customer contact center that applicants, enrollees, and authorized third parties can use statewide to receive program information, application assistance, and case information, report changes, make cost-sharing payments, and conduct other eligibility and enrollment transactions.

(f) Subject to a legislative appropriation, the commissioner of human services shall issue a request for proposal for the appropriate phase of an integrated service delivery system for health care programs, food support, cash assistance, and child care.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.