

THE LAWMAKERS' GUIDE TO MFIP

NAME:
ROOM:
TERM:

HOME ROOM

The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) is Minnesota's welfare-to-work program. It provides minimal cash assistance for families with children when low-wage parents lose work.

The primary goal of MFIP is rapid movement into employment.

To qualify for MFIP, **must meet strict work-related requirements** or attend school or training directly related to securing a job for at least 35 hours a week.

HOME ROOM

Fact: Assistance hasn't increased since 1986. A family of three receives \$532/month plus food support. This *does not* include housing.

Fact: 50 percent of families are off within one year.

Fact: There is a 60 month lifetime limit.

In order to be eligible for any kind of hardship extension, a family on MFIP must demonstrate

significant hardship and need such as:

- ♦ Family violence
- ♦ Developmental disabilities
- ♦ Participants needed in the home due to an unwell family member.

HOME ROOM

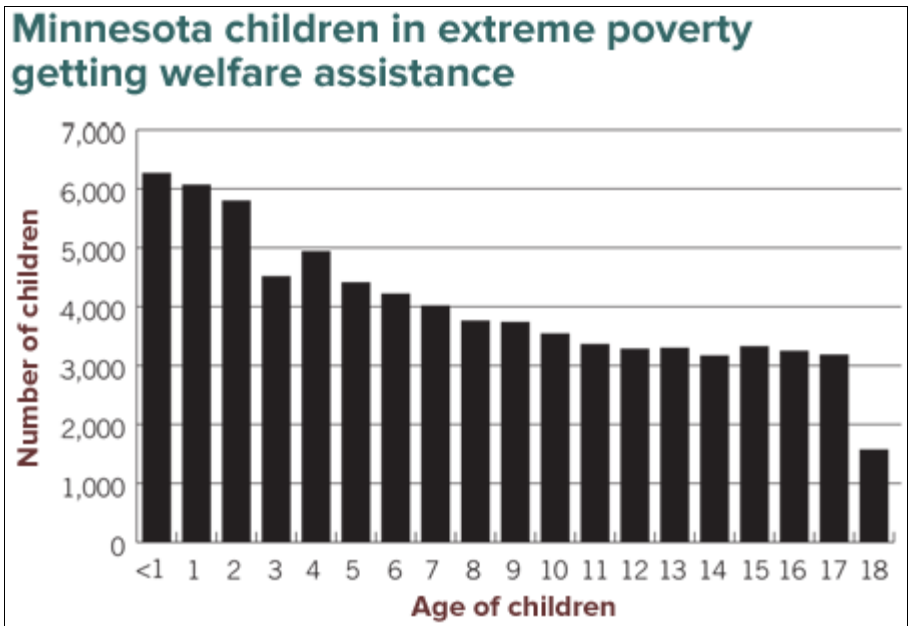
- ♦ **Approximately 65 percent of people on MFIP are children (48,000/month)**
- ♦ **To be eligible, families must have income below the federal poverty guideline (\$22, 350 for a family of 4)**

About 50% of parents on MFIP worked the quarter before applying for assistance. Reasons for job loss include:

- ♦ Company lay-offs
- ♦ A birth in the family with no available maternity leave
- ♦ Care required by an ill or disabled child or spouse
- ♦ Child care costs that exceed wages

MATH

Half of children receiving MFIP are under the age of 5.



“Child care costs for both infants and four-year-olds are higher than the average tuition and fees at a Minnesota public college.”

-Children’s Defense Fund—Minnesota

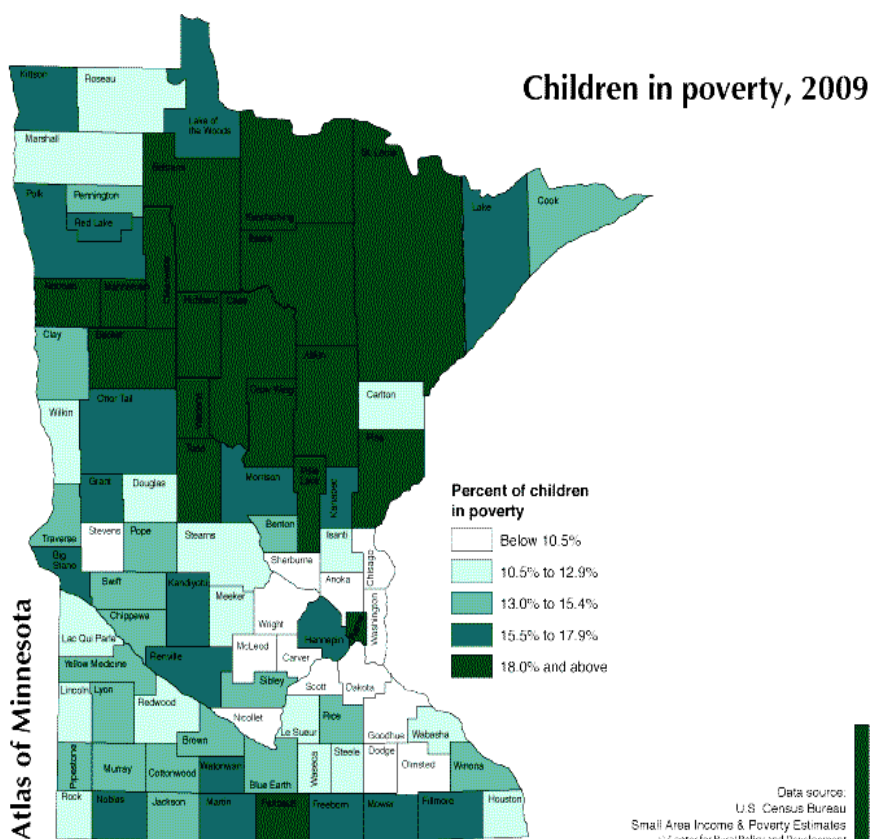
HISTORY

- ♦ **1935** — Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) established 20th century welfare model.
- ♦ **1996** — Congress and President Clinton pass historical Welfare Reform. AFDC replaced with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Reform makes work requirements and 60 month lifetime limit on benefits.
- ♦ **1997** — States implement welfare reform. MFIP implemented as Minnesota's state program. Emphasis on work and education training.
- ♦ **2003** — MFIP sanctions and Diversionary Work Program (DWP) legislation passes in Minnesota. Applicants required to have employment plan. Family caps passed to prevent payment increases if recipients have another child.
- ♦ **2008** — Worst economic crisis since the Great Depression
- ♦ **2012** — "Welfare Reform 2.0" introduced

GEOGRAPHY

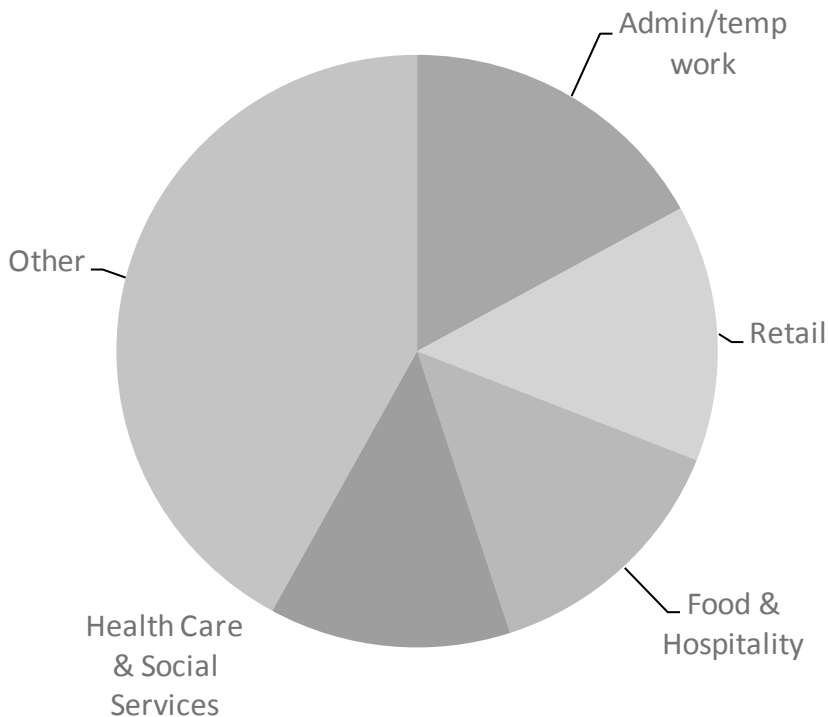
Nearly one in six children live at or below the poverty line in Minnesota. Children across the state are at risk of hunger and homelessness, compromising development.

MFIP is one of the only assistance programs in place that is specifically designed to help struggling families find their way out of poverty.



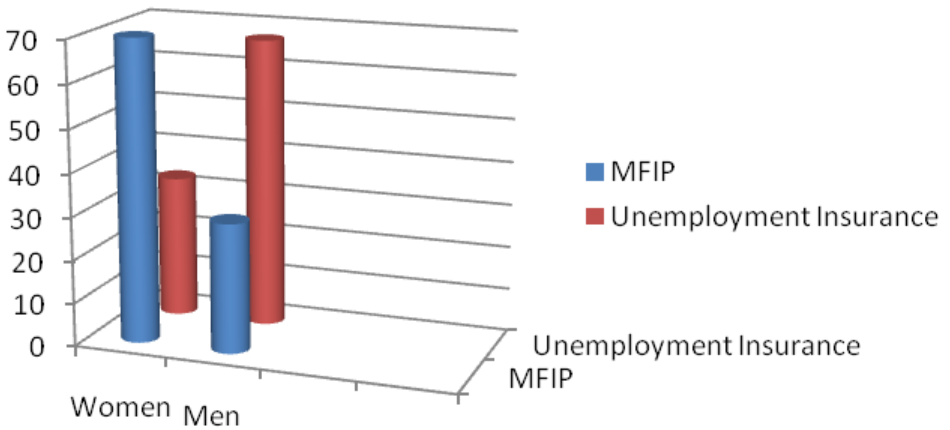
ECONOMICS

Over half of workers who turn to MFIP were employed in temp agencies, retail, service, or hospitality industries and many of them cycle between MFIP and these low-wage jobs. The nature of low-wage work makes ineligible for UI.



Job Industries of MFIP Applicants

ECONOMICS



70 percent of MFIP applicants are women.

Two thirds of Unemployment Insurance applicants are men.

ART

Six Word Stories

The cost of living is high.

Hours Cut. No Employment. MFIP, again.

Family violence. Single mother.
Torn family.

From the streets to my classroom.

Hard times. Working family. Not enough.

No childcare + No transportation = No job.

Couldn't take our dog to shelter.

Homeless and lazy? I'm only six!

Poverty. Criminals. Not the same thing.

ART

Six Word Stories

Constant struggle to keep family together.

Never asked for help before. Ashamed.

I can use towels for diapers.

Forced to grow up too fast.

Lower educational achievement = Minimum wage job.

I am a student...and homeless.

Homework? Without food and sleep?
How?

Life on the streets. Stable environment?

Out of poverty, my future opens.

FINANCE

MFIP Family of Three Monthly Deficit

Diapers	\$80
Laundry	\$20
School Activities/ Supplies	\$20
Electricity	
Gas	
Heat	
<i>Utilities Subtotal</i>	\$60
Phone	\$30
Subsidized Rent	\$177
Women's hygiene	
Medicine	
Parent/Children Toiletries	
<i>Personal Items Subtotal</i>	\$30
Seasonal Costs	
Adult Professional	
Children's	
<i>Clothes and Shoes Subtotal</i>	\$50
Monthly Bus Pass	
Child Bus Fare	
<i>Transportation Subtotal</i>	\$100
Childcare	\$80
Total	\$670
MFIP Income	\$532
Monthly Deficit	(\$138)

Many parents on MFIP are among the 50% of unemployed workers in Minnesota who do *not* qualify for unemployment insurance.

DETENTION

MFIP SANCTIONS

Families receive up to seven sanctions before their case is closed. Benefits are reduced by 10 percent during the first month of violation, and 30 percent for each month thereafter.

Why would a family receive a sanction?

1. Working 86 hours in one month, instead of the required 87 hours.
2. Forgetting to fax job search hours log to case worker.
3. Missing an appointment with a caseworker – regardless of family emergencies, transportation issues, etc.
4. Missing a program orientation (happens to immigrants/refugees who are English language learners).
5. Not having an instructor's signature on a school attendance log.

CIVICS

Please oppose “Welfare 2.0,” which would cut the Minnesota Family Investment Program and remove the small safety net that Minnesota families rely on.

Vote NO on HF 2080 / SF 1833.

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