

# MFIP - Part 1

Poverty Law I - Fall 2023  
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# What is MFIP?

- MFIP = Minnesota Family Investment Program
- Minnesota's TANF program
  - TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
  - TANF is a block grant program. The Federal Government provides states with a set amount of money and the state decides how it wants to use that money.
- Minn. Stat. § 256J

# MFIP Applications

- Applications received and processed by County Agencies
- Applicants apply by completing the Combined Application for Financial Assistance (CAF)
- Applications must be processed within 30 days
  - Minn. Stat. §256J.09, subd. 5.
- Benefits are retroactive to the date of application
  - Minn. Stat. § 256J.35(b).

# MFIP: Benefit Amounts

Eligible Household Members	Cash amount	Food Portion
1	\$380	\$235
2	\$583	\$431
3	\$686	\$619
4	\$782	\$788
5	\$865	\$945
6	\$947	\$1,148

# MFIP: Cash Benefit Amounts

- Since 2017, most MFIP households receive a **Housing Assistant Grant**, a monthly \$110 cash supplement with no restrictions on its use.
- In February 2020 the State Legislature increased the MFIP cash portion by \$100 per month per household. The change was the first cash increase since 1986. Minn. Stat. § 256J.24, subd. 5(b).
- Starting October 2021, MFIP cash grants are now adjusted annually for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index of the prior calendar year. This COLA is the first for MFIP

# MFIP General Eligibility Requirements

- Citizenship
- Minnesota Residency
- Minor Child or Pregnant Women in Assistance Unit
- Physical Presence of a Minor Child

# MFIP Eligibility: Citizenship

- To be eligible for MFIP, a member of the assistance unit must be a citizen of the United States, a qualified noncitizen as defined in section 256J.08, or a noncitizen who is otherwise residing lawfully in the United States. Minn. Stat. § 265J.11
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# MFIP Eligibility: Residency

- An assistance unit is considered to have established residency in this state only when a child or caregiver has resided in this state for at least 30 consecutive days with the intention of making the person's home here and not for any temporary purpose. Minn. Stat. § 256J.12, subd 1a.
- 30 day residency requirement can be waived for “unusual hardship” Minn. Stat. § 256J.12, subd 2(a).



# MFIP Eligibility: Minor Child or Pregnant Woman

- The assistance unit must include at least one minor child or a pregnant woman. - Minn. Stat. § 265J.13, subd. 1
- The minor child and caregiver must live together. - Minn. Stat. § 265J.13, subd.
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# MFIP Eligibility: Minor Child or Pregnant Woman

Minor Child is defined in Minn. Stat. 265J.08, subd 60 defined as:

A child who is living in the same home of a parent or other caregiver, is not the parent of a child in the home, and is either less than 18 years of age or is under the age of 19 years and is a full-time student in a secondary school or pursuing a full-time secondary level course of vocational or technical training designed to fit students for gainful employment.

# MFIP Eligibility: Minor Child or Pregnant Woman

- "Caregiver" is defined in Minn. Stat. § 256J.08, subd. 11. It includes a minor child's:
  - Birth parent
  - Adoptive parent
  - Parent and stepparent

# MFIP Eligibility: Minor Child or Pregnant Woman

- If the minor child's birth or adoptive parent **does not live in the same home** includes:
  - Legal custodian or guardian,
  - Grandparent
  - Sibling, half sibling, step sibling
  - Uncle or aunt
  - First cousin or first cousin once removed
  - Nephew or niece,
  - or a spouse of any person named above even after the marriage ends by death or divorce.

# MFIP Eligibility: Minor Child or Pregnant Woman

- Applicants can use a personal statement to establish the relationship if the information is otherwise unobtainable. Minn. Stat. § 256P.04, subd. 15(2)

# MFIP: Assistance Unit Composition

Minnesota has a mandatory assistance unit composition requirement.

- Mandatory unit members are:
  - a minor child's natural or adoptive parents and stepparents
  - minor children
  - pregnant minors
  - a minor child's minor siblings,
  - minor half-siblings, and
  - minor step-siblings;
  - and the spouse of a pregnant woman.

\* A minor child must have a caregiver for the child to be included in the assistance unit.

Minn. Stat. § 256J.24, subd. 2.

# MFIP: Assistance Unit Composition

The following mandatory household members are ineligible to receive MFIP:

- Individuals who are recipients of Supplemental Security Income or Minnesota supplemental aid;
- Individuals disqualified from SNAP or MFIP, until the disqualification ends;
- Children receiving federal, state or local foster care payments
- Children receiving ongoing Northstar kinship assistance payments
- Children receiving ongoing monthly adoption assistance payments
- Individuals disqualified from the work participation cash benefit program until that disqualification ends.

Minn. Stat. § 256J.24, subd. 3.

# MFIP: Assistance Unit Composition

The following individuals can elect to be included in the assistance unit:

- The minor child's eligible caregiver **may choose** to be in the assistance unit, if the caregiver is not a mandatory assistance member under § 256J.24, subd. 2.

Minn. Stat. § 256J.24, subd. 4.



# MFIP: Assistance Unit Composition + Deemed Income

The income of ineligible assistance unit members **must** be deemed to the household. Minn. Stat. 256J. 37

Exceptions: The income of SSI recipients