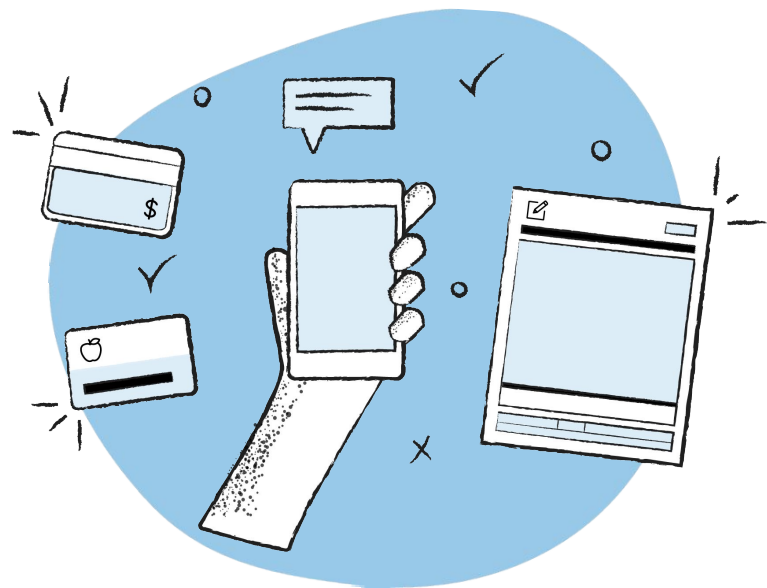


Human-centered benefits delivery with MNbenefits



Key Contacts:

Jeff Hendrix, Business Solutions Office, DHS | jeffrey.hendrix@state.mn.us

Nalleli Martinez, Code for America | nmartinez@codeforamerica.org



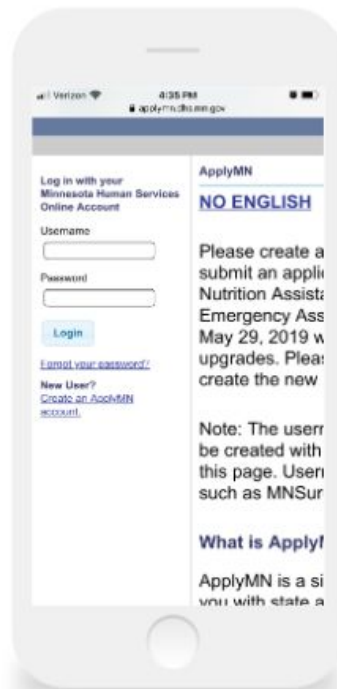
DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES

CODE for
AMERICA

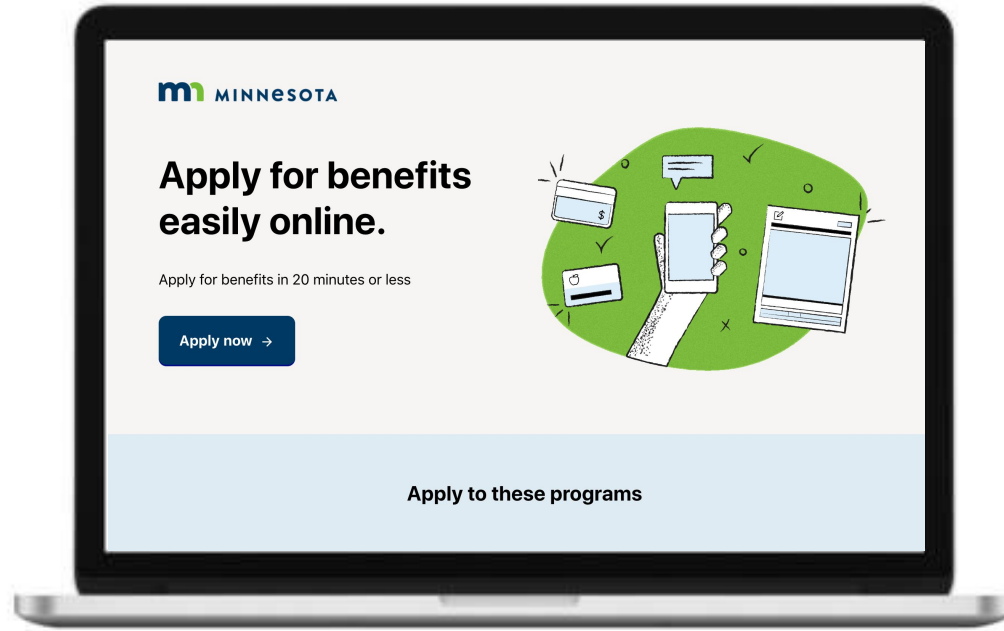
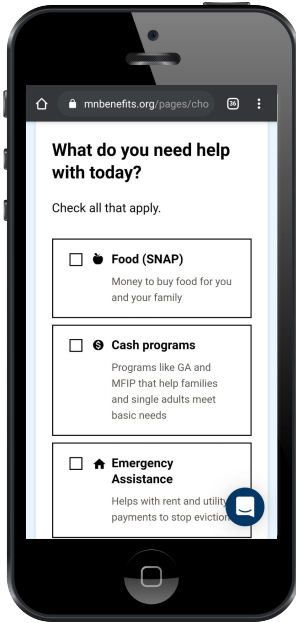
The status quo

ApplyMN

State's digital combined application



The new online benefits application: [MNbenefits.org](https://mnbenefits.org)



Project history

January 2020

Kickoff at DHS with counties and tribal nations partners

Spring & Summer 2020

Ongoing research and development, first prototypes

September 2020

Pilot launch with Hennepin & Olmsted, Wright & Wabasha follow

Early 2021

Expanded volume and features launched (doc upload, CCAP)

April 2021

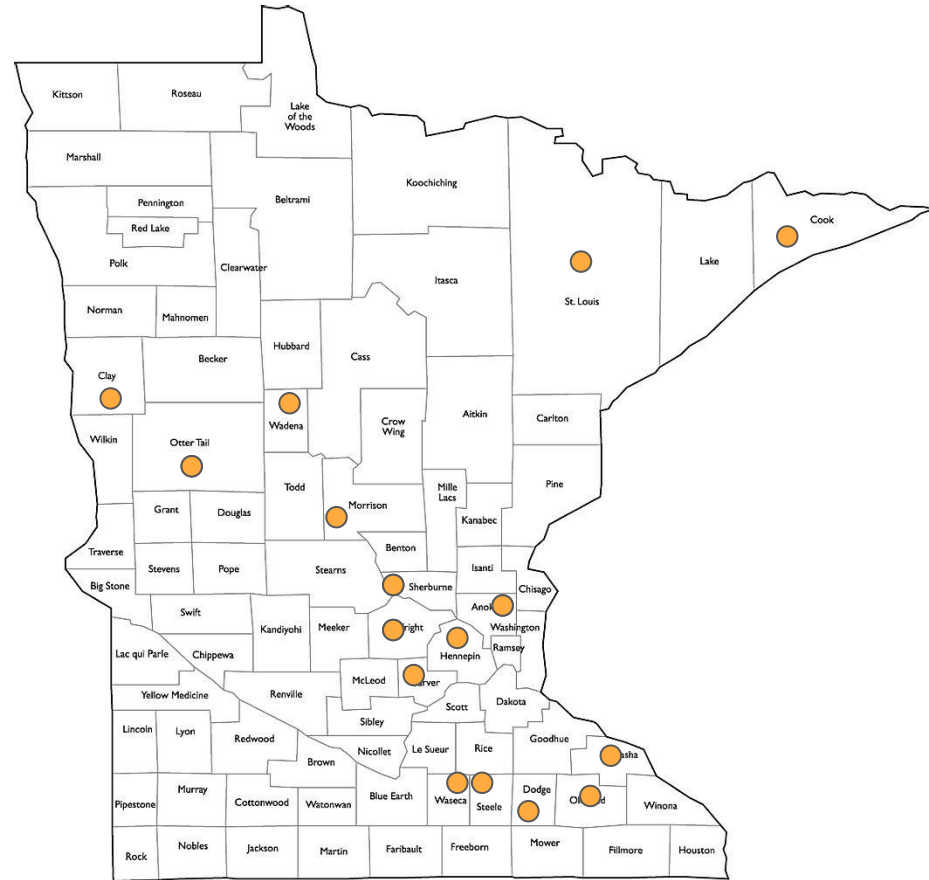
“Spring cohort” expansion - 12 additional counties added

September 2021 (tentative)

Mille Lacs added, Red Lake Nation & White Earth Nation to follow

November 2021 (tentative)

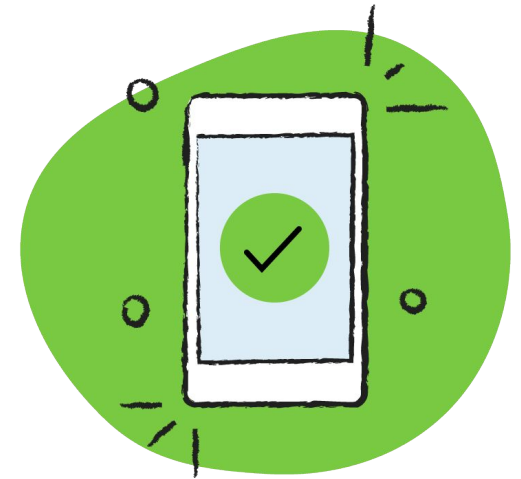
Statewide expansion; MNbenefits available to all servicing agencies



MNbenefits provides the same service as ApplyMN, with some key improvements

Features:

- 9 benefits programs (food, cash, housing support, child care)
- Mobile friendly by design
- Fully translated in Spanish
- No account registration or passwords required
- First in class accessibility design
- Easy document upload by phone and ability to upload later
- Agile, iterative improvements (34 releases and counting in 2021)
- Integrated client support and automated feedback
- Designed for and compatible with servicing agencies existing IT systems and business process



The pilot counties to date have demonstrated strong outcomes and satisfaction...

Outcomes:

- Available in **16 counties** (45% of Minnesota's population)
- **30,000+ applications** (60,000+ people served)
- Median time to completion of **12 minutes and 18 seconds**
 - Reduced from baseline of 60 minutes in ApplyMN
- In surveys of 100s of county staff, significantly higher satisfaction ratings for MNbenefits applications than ApplyMN
- In client surveys, less than 1% of applicants report a "Sad" experience, and more than 70% report "Happy"



Note: ApplyMN will still be available through at least end of 2021

... and clients appreciate the more accessible, streamlined option.

Client Voices (all direct quotes)

- It was **easy to use my phone** to do the application that is good
- I have been struggling for a long time and to have an online experience like this , simple , cut and dry information exchanges ..This has **made me feel human again** a sence of hope and optimistic energy that has not been with after trying to get help ..I thank you and applaud this new process , **well done Mn** , kudos !!
- its **GREAT for an ENGLISH AS A 2ND LANGUAGE**...
- **I can understand what you ask of me** with the large wording and few wording. And when I needed help it was explained clearly. Thank you.
- Nice, Easy to read and simple questions to answer. **I'm Disabled and Senior this system was wonderful.**
- Creo q todo es claro i facil / **Transl.** *I think that everything is clear and easy*
- This was very streamlined, and I hope I can get help. I really appreciated the layout, and the simple instructions/ questions. It was also **nice to not have to travel to apply.**

How does it all work?

1. Client inputs application info into MNbenefits and uploads documents
2. MNbenefits copies client information to familiar forms (CAF and/or CCAP PDF)
3. MNbenefits.org adds a cover page to the PDF(s)
4. PDFs delivered to county's MNITs inbox (including documents uploaded)
5. Staff process client applications to determine eligibility and issue benefits
6. Optional: Clients can return to submit documents at their convenience.

A simple web page takes in client data and copies into familiar forms (CAF, CCAP PDF, PDF documents)

MNbenefits.org

CAF (DHS 5223)

How much money have you made at this job in the last 30 days?

If you don't know the exact amount, you can estimate or leave it blank.

\$ **300**

Continue

Yes No 9. Does **anyone** in the household have a job or expect to get income from a job this month or next month? **Bring or send proof.**

If yes:

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| EMPLOYEE NAME | HOURLY WAGE (optional) | GROSS MONTHLY EARNINGS |
| EMPLOYER/BUSINESS NAME | | |
| EMPLOYEE NAME | HOURLY WAGE (optional) | GROSS MONTHLY EARNINGS |
| EMPLOYER/BUSINESS NAME | | |

Note: Include income from Work Study and paid internships. Include free benefits or reduced expenses received for work (shelter, food, clothing, etc.).

AGENCY USE: JOBS, STIN

Confirmed response VERIFICATION: requested attached

HOW OFTEN PAID: Daily Weekly Biweekly Semi-monthly Other

Details on document uploads:

Pathway: These files are submitted to the MNITs inbox through the same pathways as ApplyMN and MNbenefits applications. Metadata is show in the MNITs inbox so staff can easily identify documents and applications.

File names:

- A000027200_DOC_20210101_121641_[Confirmation Number]_EKFC.docXofY.zzz
- County ID - Document Type (Doc,MNB, OLA) - Submission Date and Time - Confirmation Number - Program Codes - Document number - File Type

Content: Files are limited a maximum of 30MB and 20 individual files. Each file the client uploads will arrive as a separate document.

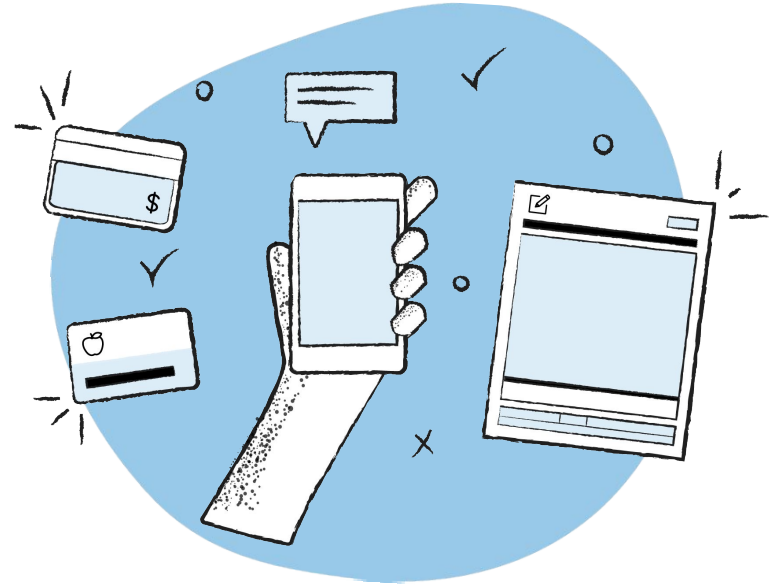
Types: MNbenefits accepts most common file types: .jpeg, .jpg, .png, .tiff, .pdf, .bmp, .gif, .doc, .docx, .odt, .ods, .odp. All types are converted to PDFs.

Modifications: MNbenefits does not examine submitted documents, but we add a system generated cover page with client name, SSN, and birthdate so county staff can match uploaded documents to active cases with a manual lookup in MAXIS.

Timing: Docs may arrive up to 30 minutes after the application.

Demonstration

demo.mnbenefits.org



**How will we get from a
pilot to a statewide
service?**

We've set a tentative timeline for statewide scaling:

September:

- CFA leads information sessions on MNbenefits in county forums
- State policy staff begin work on essential updates before statewide launch, including a Joint Bulletin

October:

- CFA leads counties onboarding and office hours
- Counties prepare staff for statewide launch
- State Policy staff complete work on essential updates
- MNIT team completes technical transition to Filenet; CFA completes MNITs inbox routing

November:

- **Statewide launch on November 2nd (TBC)**
- Gradual rollout: counties make referrals into site as comfortable
- Stabilize and respond to counties feedback

***2022: ApplyMN sunsets**

What are the next steps for new counties?

1. **Designate a lead.** This person will need to attend a 90 minute onboarding webinar and receive updates about the launch and new releases. *Typically a deputy director or senior supervisor in the eligibility services team.*
2. Complete the form. The lead should complete an onboarding form by Friday 9/24.
 - a. The form is available [here](https://forms.gle/gwk4wYKKyLa3tVJAA) (https://forms.gle/gwk4wYKKyLa3tVJAA)
3. Each county lead needs to attend any one of the following 90 minute onboarding session in October:
 - a. Tue 10/5, 2:30pm-4pm CT
 - b. Thur 10/7, 10:30am-12pm CT
 - c. Wed 10/13, 9:30am-11am CT

This training covers:

- ✓ How clients and staff can use the website
- ✓ Recommended staff onboarding & referrals strategy
- ✓ FAQs and available support

4. The county leads share onboarding materials to staff and attend optional office hours.
5. MNbenefits is “launched” for clients on 11/2 (TBC). Counties gradually refer clients to the service as they are comfortable. ApplyMN is still available until at least 2022.

Onboarding forms not completed (as of 9/21):

BECKER
BENTON
BROWN
CHISAGO
COTTONWOOD

DAKOTA
FILLMORE
LAC QUI PARLE
MARSHALL
MOWER

PENNINGTON
PINE
RAMSEY
RENVILLE
RICE

Complete the form here:

<https://forms.gle/25d8SoRYtajCyo7q7>

Thank you!

Please **help us spread the word to your peers** so that every county completes the onboarding survey and attends an October onboarding session.

Questions? Email Nalleli Martinez at nmartinez@codeforamerica.org.