

Position Statement

2022

Support Real Time Employment Eligibility Authorizations through the Work Number

Proposal

- Issue:** The Work Number (TWN)/Equifax is a company that provides wage and employment verifications for over 50,000 companies nationwide. Previously, TWN offered a free standard service that allowed eligibility workers to verify employment and an express service that offered real time information with a cost for each inquiry. In 2019, TWN no longer offered the free standard service and only allows for employment verifications for the real time contracted service which is currently estimated to be \$6.74 per verification. The express service through TWN is utilized when the participant is unable to provide this information, employers are unwilling to provide employment information, and to help support State established processing timelines. The use of TWN also allows counties to provide better customer service and to ensure program integrity.
- Implementation Strategy:** Legislative action is required to support the cost of allowing counties to access real time employment information through TWN.

Systemic Priority Alignment (check all that apply and explain why)

- Equity Service Integration Fiscal Framework

Comments:

In the fiscal year 2021 that ended on June 30, 2021, there were 267,000 hits to the work number that cost \$1,802,000 or approximately \$6.74 per hit. This cost is eligible for Federal Financial Participation (FFP) but is not built into Department of Human Services or County budgets. Therefore, full state funding is being sought to pay for this service. Last legislative session funding was allocated to cover the costs of the TWN through June 30, 2023, but a long-term solution needs to be identified.

TWN has can eliminate barriers for individuals applying for or maintaining public assistance when they may not have access to their employment information or employers are not able to provide the information timely.

Operational Priority Alignment (check all that apply and explain why)

- Behavioral Health Case Management Child Well Being Community Based Settings & Services
 Health Care Housing & Transportation Modernization Self Sufficiency

Comments:

This position statement supports the use of a tool that provides time savings to county financial workers while ensuring program integrity.

Rationale/Background:

Minnesota's SNAP and cash programs are state-supervised and county-administered. In order to ensure accurate and timely benefits administration that meets state processing guidelines, counties need access to available eligibility tools. TWN express service allows county eligibility workers to quickly determine if applicants are eligible for program benefits, thus ensuring that program benefits are extended to only qualifying participants.

Additional Information:



Submitted by: Barb Dahl, Scott County
Approved on:

