

Position Statement

2021

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 \$6.56 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:

It is estimated that approximately 215,000 employment background checks will need to be verified through The Work Number in 2021 at a cost of \$6.56 per hit. The Department of Human Services is estimating a budget cost of \$1,412,075. This cost is eligible for Federal Financial Participation (FFP). Due to TWN's change in business practice, this cost is currently not built into the Department of Human Services or County budgets. Therefore, full state funding is being sought to pay for this service.

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: Brad Thiel, Anoka County and Barb Dahl, Scott County
Approved on:

