

2012-2013 County MFIP Biennial Service Agreement

January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2013



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Type of Biennial Service Agreement

Individual county agreement

Multi-county agreement

County name: Otter Tail County

County names:

Contact Information

Contact Information:

Contact person:	John Dinsmore
Title:	Director, Otter Tail County Human Services
Address:	530 West Fir Avenue, Fergus Falls, Minnesota 56537
Telephone:	218-998-8150
Email address:	jdinsmor@co.ottertail.mn.us or vcaamfip@co.ottertail.mn.us

Part A: Statement of Needs

1. The Minnesota Legislature made significant budget cuts to the Consolidated Fund. What impact will this have on the provision of services?

- Coupled with the loss of innovation funding in December of 2011, transportation assistance will be diminished. In the rural areas, this will have a significant impact as there is little to no transportation infrastructure available for participants to seek or maintain employment. Additionally, supportive services may be limited.
- A second area adversely impacted may be a reduction in the Emergency Assistance (EA) funds we allocate to families in crisis in need of additional financial support due to eviction or utility cutoff notices.

2. In reviewing current services, which ones, if any, will be eliminated or reduced as a result of the budget cuts?

- Support services for transportation assistance will be significantly reduced
- Support services designed to remove other barriers to employment will also be diminished
- Reduction in funds will also impact client skill development and may negatively affect the Work Participation Rate.

Part B: Strengths and Resources

1. Strengths and Resources Available

Describe the strengths and resources available in the county to address the needs of MFIP/DWP families.

The County will continue to utilize the services provided by Rural Minnesota CEP (RMCEP), which have been successful in increasing the Work Participation rate. Additionally the Self-Sufficiency Index is consistently above or within the expected range of performance. RMCEP has the expertise, strategies and contacts to address the needs of MFIP/DWP families in Otter Tail County. The focus of RMCEP services is to move individuals into employment that will ensure they meet participation requirements and increase income. RMCEP has provided the following range of services:

- Diversionary Work Program (DWP), Family Stabilization Services (FSS) and Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) services according to state regulations and procedures
- Information to the county on client progress.
- Trained staff to ensure the provision of quality MFIP, DWP and FSS programs.

The provision of supportive services such as transportation costs, childcare assistance and work-related clothing to support low-income participants in their quest for employment remain key to removing barriers. Additionally, RMCEP continues to focus on Job Readiness Education, which allowed many participants to obtain their General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or receive other adult basic education, as well as support English as Second Language (ESL) activities. By using activities such as On-the-Job Training, Community/Volunteer work and Supported Work, many participants are able to increase their job skills. Activities in Career Planning, Job Search and Prevocational Skills Building are utilized to assist participants in employment exploration and employment attainment. Many participants also receive social services to assist them in addressing and overcoming barriers to employment. Vocational training is provided for participants to gain specific occupational skills, which enhance their employability.

Otter Tail County has contracted with RMCEP to utilize MFIP Supported Work Funds to augment the work training activity with significant progress. A long-standing history of strong communication between the county's financial supervisors and RMCEP enhances the quality of services provided to participants. A special FastTRAC grant with Alexandria Adult Basic Education and Alexandria Technical and Community College will allow for manufacturing specific pre-vocational training. Additionally, another special Fast TRAC grant with Minnesota State Community and Technical College and Fergus Falls Adult Basic Education will provide for specific pre-vocational training in the healthcare field as well.

As a result of the focus on these areas, Otter Tail County was able to exceed the expectations in its range of performance for the Self-Support Index and the Work Participation Rate.

2. Family Stabilization Services

a. Contact information

Name of FSS contact person:	Cary Bergo
Contact phone:	218-739-7675
Email:	caryb@rmcep.com

b. Service model

Review the county’s Family Stabilization Services (FSS) service model in the 2010-2011 Biennial Service Agreement before completing this section of the plan. Has the FSS service model changed?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes If yes, complete the question below:

Describe, in detail, the service model used by the county to provide Family Stabilization Services (FSS), including how and by whom: (1) eligibility is determined and (2) cases are managed.

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3. County Staff Person Responsible for County Contract(s)

Provide the name, phone number, and email address of the county staff responsible for overseeing county employment services contracts.

Name of contact person:	Becky Lee, Support Service Supervisor
Phone:	218-998-8150 (agency) or 218-998-8153 (direct dial)
Email address:	vcaamfip@co.ottertail.mn.us or blee@co.ottertail.mn.us

4. County Financial Assistance Contact Information

Provide the name, phone number, and email address of the financial assistance contact person for the county.

Name of contact person(s):	Pat Vanderlinden, Support Service Supervisor Barb Dohrer, Financial Assistance Supervisor Cheryl Ranum, Financial Assistance Supervisor
Phone:	Pat: 218-998-8150 (agency) or 218-998-8236 (direct dial) Barb: 218-998-8150 (agency) or 218-998-8245 (direct dial) Cheryl: 218-998-8150 (agency) or 218-998-5453 (direct dial)
Email address:	vcaamfip@co.ottertail.mn.us or pvanderl@co.ottertail.mn.us or bdohrer@co.ottertail.mn.us or cranum@co.ottertail.mn.us

5. Provider Information

List the current employment services provider(s) and check the respective box to indicate which types of services are provided. Add more rows if needed.

Name and address	Contact person	Phone	Types of services provided (Check with an 'X')			
			MFIP ES	DWP ES	FSS	Disparity
RMCEP, Inc.	Cary Bergo	218-739-7675	X	X	X	
125 Lincoln Ave W Suite 1						
Fergus Falls, MN 56537						

Part C: Outcomes and Measures

Access the links below and review the county's/tribe's Self-support Index (S-SI) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Work Participation Rate (WPR) performance:

- [Performance data S-SI](#)
- [Performance data WPR](#)

All Counties

Complete the table and questions below with the county's/tribe's performance on each of the measures, and enter if standards were met/not met for April 2010 – March 2011. In the last two columns, set practical performance targets the county will work towards achieving in the 2012 and 2013 biennium.

Measure	Standard	Annualized Performance April 2010 – March 2011		Anticipated Targets	
		County Performance	Standard met?		
				2012	2013
S-SI	Within or above the range of expected performance on the annualized three - year S-SI	78.2%	Yes	78.2%	78.5%
WPR	WPR of 39.8% (50% minus a CRC of 10.2%) or a 5 percentage point improvement from the previous year	50.2%	Yes	39.8%	39.8%

For each measure for which the county/tribe met the standard, in the respective box below, provide a summary of successful strategies, including an overview of how well current practices are working to improve the county's/tribe's current performance. Include any new strategies the county/tribe will implement in the 2012-2013 biennium.

S-SI (Self-Support Index) Performance Strategies

The Self-Support Index (S-SI) is defined as follow:

- Percentage of caregivers eligible for MFIP or DWP in a baseline quarter that are a “success” in the measurement quarter three years later. Success is defined as either working an average of 30 or more hours per week in paid employment OR being off the cash portion of MFIP in each month of the measurement quarter.

RMCEP's Supported Work and the Job Search System and related curriculum have been strong strategies and resources that have contributed to a positive performance for the Self-Support Index (S-SI) measure. The services of RMCEP are designed to enhance the earning and employment potential of participants. If individuals can become engaged in work

activities early, their likelihood for success increases. Staff maintain and develop new Supported Work sites for participants with barriers that inhibit or prevent them from job searching. While on Supported Work, so-called soft-skills (e.g., one's attitude, interpersonal communication skills, emotional intelligence, etc.) and work ethics (honesty, responsibility, accountability, etc.) are addressed by staff and resources are identified and/or provided to assist with daycare, transportation and other work issues. In addition, RMCEP job counselors identify basic education, licensure and mental health issues early on during the process and continue to monitor and assist progress with these areas.

In the Job Search System, individuals learn the skills necessary to find employment. This enhances their ability to find new jobs if necessary. Paid and unpaid employment allows participants to become accustomed to work and learn basic job skills. On-the-job training is available for new jobs and to upgrade skills. Participants also enhance their employability and opportunities for promotion by working toward a diploma or GED. Key Train software also provides MFIP participants with an opportunity to upgrade skills. RMCEP staff provide information on basic job retention issues such as teamwork, employer expectations, balancing work and family, problem solving, communication, time management, and how to get promoted. The National Career Readiness Certificate system (NCRC) will be incorporated into the career planning process to help participants become more marketable to employers.

All of these strategies, with the emphasis on work training, have been successful strategies as evidenced by the positive outcomes in the SSI measurement.

WPR (Work Participation Rates) Performance Strategies

The federal measure defining the Work Participation Rate is as follows:

- The average monthly percentage of MFIP cases funded by the federal TANF program (and, therefore, required to meet work participation requirements) that successfully complete and document the required number of hours in approved work or work-related activities in the given month.

RMCEP's Supported Work program has been very successful in increasing participation rates and we will continue to use this strategy. Additionally, we will continue to closely monitor participants to help increase motivation and participation.

We are also mindful of future performance measures and outcomes that will be created due to the passage of the 2009 State-County Results, Accountability, and Service Delivery Reform Act. A Steering Committee on Performance and Outcomes Reforms has proposed community results-oriented goal areas that we believe are critical to our continued WPR positive accomplishments. In 2012-2013, we believe it will be important to monitor and/or promote accomplishment of the following results and measures to support the Work Participation Rate standard:

People are economically secure

- People have the opportunity to attain and maintain employment.
- The way people access and enroll in income support services is timely, respectful and non-discriminatory.
- Both parents contribute to children's financial security.
- People unable to meet their basic needs receive safety net services

People have access to health care coverage

- Low income people have health care coverage.
- The way people access, enroll and maintain health care coverage is timely, respectful and non-discriminatory
- People with specialized health care needs are connected to resources or services

Counties below the expected range of performance on the SS-I and/or with a WPR rate below 39.8 percent that *did not* achieve a 5 percent improvement from the previous year.

These counties will not receive the 2.5 percent performance bonus for the SS-I and/or the WPR unless they submit a performance improvement plan that is approved by the department. If the county is planning to submit a PIP for the SS-I and/or the WPR, access the links below for instructions on how to complete the form:

- [PIP instructions](#)
- [2012 PIP Form](#)

Performance data of subgroups on the S-SI and WPR over four alternate quarters covering July 2009 – March 2011 (July – September 2009, January–March 2010, July–September 2010 and January–March 2011) are provided below. Performance gaps were calculated when a county subgroup performance was five percentage points or more below the performance of whites. [Only county and subgroup caseloads of 30 or more were used for this measure] Click on the link below to review a summary of subgroup performance data for S-SI and WPR within the county.

[Two-year Performance Trend of Racial/Ethnic and Immigrant Sub-groups](#)

Counties with a performance gap in one or more subgroups

If the county has one or more subgroups with a performance gap in *both* the last quarter (Jan. –Mar. 2011), and the average of the four quarters, list the subgroup(s), providing the required data in the table, and respond to the questions that follow for each of the subgroup(s) listed.

1. Counties with a 5 percent gap in outcomes as shown on the WPR/SS-I between the non-white population and white population within the county will need to complete this section.

Population	WPR%	WPR#	WPR proposed change by % and #	SS-I %	SS-I #	SS-I proposed change by % and #	By what date will improvement occur

2. Identify at least three strategies and at least two action steps under each strategy that the county will use to reduce disparities in outcomes for each population identified in question 1. (Add additional tables if there are more than two non-white populations that have a disparity.)

Population	Strategy	Action Steps

3. How will the county monitor progress toward reduction in disparities on a semi-annual basis?

Not applicable

4. What are the criteria for improvements other than a reduction in the disparities gap itself?

Not applicable

5. How will the county continue to engage community partners, particularly employers, with disparities efforts?

Not applicable

Part D: Budget

Click on the link below to review the 2012 MFIP allocations:

[2012 MFIP Allocations](#)

In the last biennium, the department received federal stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for short-term nonrecurring services. Counties were asked to revise their emergency services/crisis plans to include a wide variety of services that the funds can cover. Now that the stimulus funds have ended, the department requests that for those counties that did not send in a revised plan as of January 2011, email the current plan to Mayjoua Ly at mayjoua.ly@state.mn.us. The department maintains a file on each county’s emergency services/crisis plans in order to answer requests for information from internal and external sources.

Emergency services in counties with American Indian reservations

Briefly describe how the county consults with the tribes on county emergency services and policies governing all residents of the county.

In the budget table, indicate the amount and percentage for each item listed for the budget line items for calendar years 2012-2013. Also note:

- Total percent must equal 100.
- MFIP administration is capped at 7.5 percent unless the county is applying for an administrative cap waiver. To apply for the administrative cap waiver, respond to the questions that follow this budget page.
- If “other” is used, briefly state or describe the line item.

2012 MFIP	Budgeted Amount	Percent
Employment services (DWP)	\$100,000	18%
Employment services (MFIP)	\$210,000	37%
Emergency services	\$110,000	20%
Administration	\$33,905	6%
Income maintenance direct administration	\$110,000	20%
Other 1 (please state):	\$	%
Other 2 (please state):	\$	%
Total	\$563,905	100 %

2013 MFIP	Budgeted Amount	Percent
Employment services (DWP)	\$100,000	18%
Employment services (MFIP)	\$210,000	37%
Emergency services	\$110,000	20%
Administration	\$33,905	6%
Income maintenance direct administration	\$110,000	20%
Other 1 (please state):	\$	%
Other 2 (please state):	\$	%
Total	\$563,905	100 %

Administrative cap waiver (optional)

MFIP provisions allow counties to request a waiver of the MFIP administrative cap (currently 7.5 percent) for providing supported employment, unpaid work, or community work experience programs for a major segment of the county’s or tribe’s MFIP population.

Counties may request a waiver of the administrative cap when submitting their 2012-2013 service agreement by responding to the questions below.

Is the county requesting a waiver of the MFIP administrative cap for the 2012-2013 biennium?

No. No other action needs to be taken.
 Yes. If yes, provide a concise response to the following three questions.

1. Describe the budget change (include any staff changes).

Not applicable

2. Describe any new activities or services will be provided.

Not applicable

3. Describe the targeted population and number of people expected to be served.

Not applicable

Part E: Certifications and Assurances

PUBLIC INPUT

Prior to submission, did the county facilitate a process soliciting public input for at least 30 days on the contents of the agreement?

Yes No Was public input received/used? Yes No

ASSURANCES

It is understood and agreed by the county board that funds granted pursuant to this service agreement will be expended for the purposes outlined in Minn. Stat. §256J; that the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (hereafter department) has the authority to review and monitor compliance with the service agreement, and that documentation of compliance will be available for audit; that the county shall make reasonable efforts to comply with all MFIP requirements, including efforts to identify and apply for available state and federal funding for services within the limits of available funding; and that the county agrees to operate MFIP in accordance with state law and guidance from the department.

SERVICE AGREEMENT CERTIFICATION

Checking this box certifies that this 2012-2013 MFIP Biennial Service Agreement has been prepared as required and approved by the county board(s) under the provisions of [Minn. Stat. §256J](#). In the box below, state the name of the chair of the county board of commissioners or authorized designee, their mailing address and the name of the county.

Name (chair or designee)	Mailing address	County
John Lindquist	Government Services Center 530 West Fir Avenue Fergus Falls, MN 56537	Otter Tail

DATE OF CERTIFICATION: October 25, 2011