



MSA - (Minnesota Supplemental Aid)

What is MSA?

MSA is Minnesota Supplemental Aid. It is a small amount the state pays to people with low incomes who are elderly, blind or disabled and who get Supplemental Security Income (SSI). It is also possible to qualify for MSA if you get Social Security Disability benefits that are more than \$735 but less than \$816 per month.

- A person who gets the basic SSI grant of \$735 and lives alone normally gets \$81 in MSA.
- A married couple who live alone and get the SSI couple's rate of \$1100 normally get \$84 in MSA.
- If you live in certain types of non-medical care facilities, the amount is \$97 per month.

Because of the way MSA is figured out, you usually can't get it if you live with anyone else except a spouse who also gets SSI.

The state defines "living with others" to include people living in boarding houses or single-room facilities with shared kitchens and bathrooms. If you live in a place like this and get denied MSA, contact Legal Aid.

Any income you have above the SSI amount counts against your MSA grant, but if you work, some of your earned income is not counted.



Special Needs Payments

If you qualify for MSA, sometimes you can get more if:

- you need certain kinds of special diets prescribed by a doctor
- you have a representative payee, guardian or conservator who charges fees
- you have a one-time need for home repairs or replacement of furniture or appliances
- you pay a high rent and
 - are moving from an institution or residential mental health treatment program or
 - get waived services through Medical Assistance (MA)

Should I apply for MSA?

Yes, if you:

- Are 65 or older or

- Are blind or disabled and between the ages of 18 and 65
- MSA uses the same rules as Social Security to say who is disabled. You can find [information about this](#) on the Social Security Administration’s site at www.ssa.gov.

Your income must be less than the amounts listed above, or you must have special needs. Special needs can be things like a special diet or representative payee fees. You can also get special need payments for home repairs, furniture or appliances. MSA has asset limits. To apply, file an application at your county welfare office or apply online at www.ApplyMN.dhs.mn.gov. You can also call and ask them to mail you an application, but you can’t apply by phone. A worker goes over your income and assets to see if you are eligible.

What are the MSA asset limits?

Assets mean money or property. If you get SSI, the asset limits for MSA are the same as for SSI. This means a single person can have up to \$2,000 in assets. A couple can have up to \$3,000. But some things don’t count:

- A home
- Personal items and household goods
- 1 car, value doesn't matter, as long as you or someone in your household uses it
- Any property or tools you use to support yourself
- Life insurance and burial plans worth up to \$1,500
- Burial plots



The asset limits are higher for some people who only get Social Security Retirement or Disability benefits but not SSI.

Emergency Minnesota Supplemental Assistance (EMSA) no longer exists. If you have an emergency, apply for Emergency General Assistance. See our fact sheet [Emergency General Assistance](#).

What if I get turned down for MSA?

You have the right to appeal. There are 2 ways to get your appeal in:

Online:

You can [fill out a form and submit your appeal](#) online.

Go to: www.LawHelpMN.org/resource/form-helper.



→ Click on “Government Benefits”

→ Click on “Appeal a Decision for Denied, Reduced or Cut-Off Benefits”

Read it carefully, fill it out completely and click "Submit" on the bottom right. It is a good idea to print a copy for yourself.

By mail or fax:

You can write a letter and mail or fax it. Say you want to appeal an MFIP decision and why. Make sure you put your case number and the date on your letter. Keep a copy for yourself. The papers they sent you should have the address and fax number you need.

For more information see our fact sheet, [Welfare Appeals to DHS](#).

You have 30 days from the date you got the notice that says you were turned down to file an appeal. You may appeal within 90 days of the notice if you have a good reason for not being able to appeal in 30 days.

You will get a hearing with a state human services judge, who will make a written decision on your appeal. If you have an emergency, ask for an **expedited** appeal (“expedited” means fast). Then your hearing date will be set quickly.



Find more fact sheets at www.lawhelpmn.org/LASMfactsheets

Find your local legal aid office at www.lawhelpmn.org/resource/legal-aid-offices

Fact Sheets are legal information NOT legal advice. See a lawyer for advice.

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