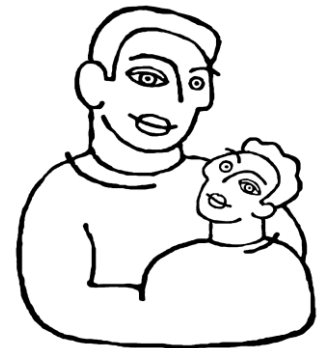




## MFIP Employment Plans

### Making Your Employment Plan (EP)

All parents or caregivers who get MFIP must work with a job counselor and write an Employment Plan (EP). EPs are written every 3 months or when your activities need to be changed, whichever is sooner. If you don't do the activities on your plan, you will be sanctioned. This means all or part of your MFIP is taken away. See our fact sheet [MFIP and FSS Employment Sanctions](#).



There are rules about how many hours you have to put into activities for your EP.

- If you are a single parent and any of your children are 5 years old or less, you have to do 87 hours a month
- If you are a single parent with children older than 5 years old, you have to do 130 hours a month
- If there are 2 parents in your home, you add your hours together and it has to be at least 55 hours a week.

Your job counselor may have more hours than this on your plan. You may also choose to have more hours than this so that you can get child care for your activities. But you should not be sanctioned as long as you are doing activities for the number of hours listed above. If you are being threatened with a sanction, contact your local legal aid office.

### Typical EPs

- If you are working the minimum hours listed above, that will probably be the only activity on your plan.
- If you are not working the minimum hours, your job counselor adds other activities.
- If you are not working, your job counselor may say you have to do job search or participate in job search activities. This could be things like resume writing or going to workshops that teach about interviewing. If you don't find a job in 3 months, you may have to do volunteer work.
- Going to school (adult basic education, GED classes, ESL classes, two-year degrees, and four-year degrees) can be on your plan. See our fact sheet [MFIP: Education and Training](#).

- If you have things you need to do like getting you or your child to regular medical appointments or court-ordered activities, talk to your job counselor. These may be added to your plan. Or you may be able to get Family Stabilization Services (see below).

### **What if I can't do that much?**

Do you have things in your life that make it hard for you to do the number of hours they say you have to do? Tell them. You may be able to get a modified employment plan or be transferred to Family Stabilization Services (FSS). FSS gives families the same benefits but usually requires less hours and work. See our fact sheet [Family Stabilization Services \(FSS\)](#).

MFIP modified employment plans and FSS employment plans may have less work or work search hours. It depends on your situation. If a doctor says there are reasons that you can't work at all, get a form from your job counselor for your doctor to fill out. Talk to your job counselor about your problems that make it hard for you to work and you may be able to do different activities. If your job counselor tells you to do something you can't do, contact legal aid.

You can get a modified employment plan or be transferred to FSS if:

**1. You are Age 60 or Over**

**2. You are Ill or Disabled**

Show that you are applying for SSI or RSDI or get proof from a doctor that your illness or injury is:

- going to last more than 30 days, **and**
- so bad that you can't look for a job or go to work or work 20 hours or more a week. Pregnancy can be a disability, if you show that you can't work because of it.



**3. There is a Child or Adult in Your Household Who You Need to Stay Home to Care For**  
Get proof from a doctor:

- That the person is ill or disabled
- That the condition will last for more than 30 days
- That you need to be home to take care of the person
- Or show that the family member qualifies for home care or case management services

**4. There Is a Child or Adult in Your Household Who Is Eligible for Special Medical Services**

For example: a child who is severely emotionally disturbed or an adult with serious and persistent mental illness. Get proof of the medical condition from a doctor or psychologist. You do not have to prove you are needed in the home to meet this category.

If you qualify your MFIP months are “banked.” **This means that you can get a month of MFIP past the 60-month limit for each month you qualify.** Ask your job counselor and financial worker to make sure your months are being banked.



**5. You are a Family Violence Victim**

You need to add a family violence waiver to your Employment Plan. The waiver must be written by you, your job counselor, and a domestic violence advocate. When you have a family violence waiver, you can get credit for doing activities which help you to stay safe. You don't have to do work activities if it is not safe for you.

If you don't have a domestic violence advocate, your job counselor must refer you to one. To find an advocate on your own, call (866) 223-1111. **The months you have a family violence waiver do not count towards your 60-month MFIP limit.**

See our fact sheet [MFIP and FSS for Family Violence Victims](#).

**6. You are in a Personal or Family Crisis**

You can't follow your employment plan because of the crisis. The county can ask for proof showing how bad it is. Examples of a personal or family crisis are homelessness, getting an eviction notice, living in a shelter, utility shut offs, and medical emergencies.

**7. You are a non-citizen who has been in the U.S. for less than a year and qualify for MFIP.**

**8. Other Reasons**

If you have learning disabilities or a low IQ and have trouble finding and keeping jobs, a criminal record which makes it hard to get jobs, or other reasons you cannot find or keep jobs, tell your employment counselor. You may qualify for a modified employment plan or FSS.

## Taking Care of a Baby

If you have a child under one year old, you can choose to not work with a job counselor to be home with your baby. You can use this option up to 12 months in your lifetime. You can use all 12 months with 1 child or split the months up between 2 or more children if you plan to have more.

In 2 parent families, only 1 parent can choose this at a time, and the household gets a **total** of 12 months- not 12 months for each parent.

## Parents Under 20

Parents under 20 who are in high school or a GED program don't have to work. Your job counselor checks to see if you are meeting school attendance rules.

## “Good Cause” Not to Work

You may have “good cause” to not do some employment training. Good cause can be things like no transportation or child care, or an MFIP meeting is at the same time as a court hearing or your work hours.

“Good cause” is **not** easy to prove. If you have good cause for missing a meeting, call your job counselor to reset the meeting. Any time you can't do the things in your job search or employment plan, **tell** your job counselor why. **Do this right away!**

## If You Can't Work or Do Everything on Your Plan

If you can't work, tell your job counselor right away! Get proof of the reason. Ask for a modified employment plan or to be transferred to FSS. If they won't give you one, get a written denial. Write a letter to appeal. See our fact sheet [Welfare Appeals to DHS](#).



Call your legal aid office for help. Find your local office on [www.lawhelpmn.org/providers-and-clinics](http://www.lawhelpmn.org/providers-and-clinics)

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

*Don't use this fact sheet if it is more than 1 year old. Ask us for updates, a fact sheet list, or alternate formats.*

© 2020 Minnesota Legal Services Coalition. This document may be reproduced and used for non-commercial personal and educational purposes only. All other rights reserved. This notice must remain on all copies. Reproduction, distribution, and use for commercial purposes are strictly prohibited.