



MFIP: Education and Training

MFIP and Work

Most parents on MFIP must look for a job and go to work. If you want more education or training, you may be able to get it. You have to ask for what you want and show why it is a good plan. Read this fact sheet and call your legal aid office if you need help.

MFIP Work Assessment

When you start MFIP, you meet with a job counselor for an “assessment.” This means gathering information about you to see what can help you get and keep a job. The job counselor looks at your education, interests, work history, skills, and the job market to see if you are likely to find a “suitable job.” A suitable job pays at least minimum wage, is safe and decent, and fits your physical and mental skills.



The job counselor should also ask about things that might make it hard for you to find or keep a job. Things like childcare and transportation needs and any personal or family issues, including family violence.

The counselor should ask you if you need updated courses for a certificate or license. If so, that should be in your job plan.

Let your job counselor know if you have any mental health, chemical health or special learning needs that may make it hard for you to find or keep a job.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes



Tell your job counselor if your English is not good enough to fill out applications, go to interviews, or follow job rules. The job counselor will get your English tested. If your English ability is below a certain level (SPL6), you can take ESL classes until your English ability reaches the SPL6 level. There are no time limits or limits on the number of hours you can take classes. You can combine classes with other work activities if you want. Your job counselor reviews your progress every 3 months.

There are 2 kinds of ESL classes.

- **Functional Work Literacy Classes.** These classes teach you how to get and keep a job. They are at least 20 hours a week. Your job counselor puts you in intensive classes when they are available.
- **Regular ESL Classes.** These classes help improve your ability to speak, read and write English.

High School & GED for Parents Under 20

If you are under 18, you usually have to stay in school for a high school diploma or GED. If you are 18 or 19 and don't have a high school diploma or GED, you can choose to work or go to school. If you choose school, the months won't count in your 60-month limit. If you choose work, they do.

High School, GED, Adult Basic Education (ABE) For Parents 20 And Over

If you don't have a high school diploma, GED, or an adult high school diploma, you can take Adult Basic Education courses. You don't have to test below any certain grade level and there is no cap on the number of hours you can go to school. This means you can choose to use all your employment plan hours in education activities. Your job counselor reviews your progress every 3 months. You need to be in good standing with your school for your hours to count for MFIP.

Education After High School

The rules for training and post-high school education have changed over the years. These are the current rules:

- You can enroll in training or post-high school education lasting up to 4 years. This means you can get a 4-year degree while on MFIP.
- You don't have to add other work activities to your plan. All your time can be spent in educational activities.
- Your job counselor reviews your case every 3 months to see if you are making good progress. You need to be in good standing with your school for your hours to count for MFIP.
- You need to talk about your education plans with your job counselor, but your job counselor doesn't have to okay your education and training. Your job counselor must:
 - help you get information,
 - advise you on job possibilities based on your educational choice,
 - help you find out if you meet admission requirements, and
 - talk to you about your strengths and challenges.



- You don't need job counselor input if you are in:
 - a recognized career pathway program
 - a training program lasting 12 weeks or less,
 - the final year of a post high school education or
 - a training program that lasts more than 1 year.
- After you finish your education or training, you have 12 weeks to look for a job in your field. If you can't find a job in your field by then, you need to take a job outside your field. Or you can meet with your job counselor to change your employment plan to include other work activities.

For all the above education options, you may use up to an hour of study time for each hour of class time to fulfill your hours. Your instructor has to agree that the amount of time is reasonable.



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.

© 2027 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.