

Stabilizing economic relief for people living in, near poverty

Minnesota's economic assistance programs provide a safety net for people who struggle to meet their basic needs in life, but administrative requirements and gaps sometimes make it harder for them to access these programs consistently. The Governor's budget will strengthen the safety net with improvements to make support more reliable and stable.

The changes will allow the Minnesota Family Investment Program and General Assistance to provide more consistent financial support, and increase the monthly benefit for General Assistance to offer Minnesotans living in deep poverty more support to meet their basic needs. Community supports and services will become available to Minnesotans who have been impacted by the pandemic's economic effects but lack access to other forms of economic assistance. Another proposal will improve a program that helps families with low incomes build assets.

Proposals

Governor Walz's budget includes the following proposals:

- **Stabilizing financial support for working Minnesotans in economic assistance programs:** Changes in the way the Minnesota Family Investment Program and General Assistance calculate benefits will offer more consistent financial support to people with low incomes. Moving to a six-month budgeting period, instead of monthly, will align these programs with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Housing Support. Benefits will be based on income from the last 30 days, instead of from two months ago. *FY 2023: \$670,000; FY 2024-25: \$41.1 million from the general fund*
- **Raising General Assistance benefits for Minnesotans living in deep poverty:** Increasing the maximum monthly General Assistance benefit from \$203 to \$355 will offer people in deep poverty more support to meet their basic needs. The proposal will also adjust the benefit each year to reflect inflation. Other technical changes will improve the program, including eliminating a requirement to recover any overpayment of benefits resulting from agency error. *FY 2023: \$82,000; FY 2024-25: \$45.5 million*
- **Connecting more Minnesotans to economic relief and support services:** Community services and supports will remain available to people who have experienced the economic impact of the pandemic but don't have access to other forms of economic assistance. A temporary two-year expansion of existing community support services will serve 5,000 more Minnesota households. Outreach and research will aim to address systemic economic barriers for children living in poverty. *FY 2023: \$3.6 million; FY 2024-25: \$38 million*
- **Supporting Minnesota families to build assets:** The proposal will expand the Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota program, which gives people with low incomes matched savings accounts. Increasing the lifetime financial match limit from \$6,000 to \$9,000 will help families build assets. The changes will also allow participants to contribute to 529 college savings plans and emergency savings accounts for unexpected expenses. *FY 2023: \$5 million; FY 2024-25: \$10 million*

Related information

Governor's 2022 Revised Supplemental Budget Recommendations:

- [Stabilizing Working Minnesotans](#)
- [Addressing Deep Poverty in Minnesota](#)
- [Connecting Minnesotans to Services and Supports](#)
- [Building Assets for Minnesota Families](#)

Additional background:

- [General Assistance program fact sheet](#)
- [Facts about the Minnesota Family Investment Program fact sheet](#)
- [Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota fact sheet](#)