

# **MinnesotaCare Program Helpline and Disability Linkage Line® Reports**

**Department of Human Services  
Health Care Administration**

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# 1. Introduction

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) created this report in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Section 256.01, Subdivision 31, to report on the consumer experience in the use of DHS' helplines.

- **MinnesotaCare program helpline**, including background on methods used to evaluate, recently implemented initiatives to improve customer service and plans for future initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the helpline.
- **Disability Linkage Line®**, including evaluation of services, recent initiatives to improve customer service and plans to enhance the helpline.

# 2. MinnesotaCare Program Helpline

The MinnesotaCare program helpline – (651) 297-3862 or (800) 657-3672 – uses various phone measurements to evaluate efficiencies of incoming calls and to improve customer service. Callers are routed to the MinnesotaCare Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) line where agents are available to assist them from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

## MinnesotaCare Program Helpline: Data and Evaluation

Here are the monthly averages for the MinnesotaCare program helpline phone data for 2016:

### January 2016 to December 2016

Average monthly calls routed to the ACD line	Calls connected to an agent	Time a consumer waits to speak with an agent
25,308*	62%	12 minutes, 59 seconds

\*Calls were periodically routed to another division to allow MinnesotaCare staff to process renewal applications.

To ensure optimum services for consumers calling into the MinnesotaCare program helpline, staff consider and monitor a few factors daily:

- **Anticipating consumer calls.** This provides agents with the ability to plan and ensures that calls are promptly handle within the predetermined performance standard.
- **Providing phone coverage for hours of operation.** In order to provide nine hours of phone coverage, agents are assigned to different shifts to allow for coverage at all times.

- **Scheduling times to take lunch and breaks.** This information allows agents to adequately provide phone coverage during the lunch and break hours at busy times during the day.

**Note:** In addition to calling the MinnesotaCare program helpline, consumers may visit the MinnesotaCare office in person to make MinnesotaCare premium payments or can meet with an agent between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

## 2016 Improvements

- **Upgraded Customer Relations Management (CRM) contact tracking system.**  
The new tracking system replaced the MinnesotaCare program helpline's old contact tracking system. This change in tracking mechanism will ensure alignment with the technology used by the MNsure and other DHS call centers to streamline services provided to consumers.

## Future Improvements

The initiatives below are efforts DHS is planning to better serve consumers through enhanced efficiencies and effectiveness of the MinnesotaCare program helpline.

- **Upgrade Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system.**  
This upgrade aims to provide consumers with an automated option to obtain information regarding their case and payment information.
- **Upgrade Quality Management system.**  
This upgrade provides the ability to measure quality assurance and establish call recording of consumer calls. Analyses of these calls will assist in evaluating and developing staff training to enhance agents' customer service skills.
- **Upgrade Workforce Management system.**  
This upgrade provides the ability to efficiently and accurately anticipate and forecast agent staffing needs, so the helpline is available to effectively handle consumer calls.
- **Upgrade telephony platform.**  
This upgrade improves technological tools for phones and agent desktop application.
- **Provide ongoing customer service training.** Ongoing training for agents will help improve consumer experience when calling into the helpline. This training will include in-person training, workshops and presentations.
- **Develop performance standards.**  
Because DHS is establishing new systems and programs, the previous performance standards are no longer applicable. Staff will develop performance standards and monitor each agent's performance to ensure standards are met. This will confirm that agents are handling consumer calls efficiently and will identify areas requiring improvement.

### 3. Disability Linkage Line®

Minnesota’s Disability Linkage Line® (1-866-333-2466) makes it easier for people with disabilities to understand their options, connect to solutions, and engage in possibilities. They do this through a network of experts, tools, and partnerships that bridge systems, and focus on helping people create their best life. The service is a collaborative partner in the statewide Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) initiative, the MinnesotaHelp Network®, which includes the Disability Linkage Line®, Senior LinkAge Line®, and Veterans Linkage Line™.

The Disability Linkage Line® operates during regular business hours, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Voicemails are accepted 24/7. Disability Linkage Line’s Options Counselors are certified by DHS prior to providing service. All Options Counselors are expected to become certified by the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (AIRS). In addition, staff who want to provide work and benefits planning services, need to complete a one year training and become certified Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor (CPWIC).

#### Disability Linkage Line®: Data and Evaluation

The Disability Linkage Line® and the other partners in the MinnesotaHelp Network® use an integrated automated call distribution and messaging system (ACD) called Revation for all calls and chats. Calls are automatically routed to available Options Counselors located at six regional sites throughout the state. If one is not available, callers can choose to either wait or leave a voicemail message. Messages are returned within one business day.

In calendar year 2016, the Disability Linkage Line® total contacts grew by about 8%. Staff handled 84,288 contacts, serving 30,211 people. The average hold time was 2:48 minutes.

Total Contacts	Customers Served	Time a person waits to speak with an agent
<b>84, 288</b>	<b>30,211</b>	<b>2.48</b>

#### Customer Needs and Inquiries

In 2016, callers asked most frequently about:

- Health benefits (n=61,535)
- Public benefits (n=9,835)
- Housing/shelter (n=4,597)
- Individual and family supports (n=4,207)
- Legal (n=3,403)
- Financial assistance (n=3,251)
- Employment/volunteering (n=3,181)
- Care transitions (n=2,968)

#### Customer Satisfaction

Callers participate in customer satisfaction surveys in 2016.

- 99% indicated the Disability Linkage Line® was helpful.
- 92% said they learned something new from the Disability Linkage Line®.
- 98% said they would recommend Disability Linkage Line® to someone else.
- Below are the outcomes customers reported on the satisfaction surveys:

The Disability Linkage Line® helped me (check all that apply):

Understand my benefits and options	74%
Resolve a problem	58%
Make decisions about services	54%
Connect with another organization	42%
Other	16%
Explore work or school/training	8%
I was not able to get help from the Disability Linkage Line®	2%

### Quality Improvement and Evaluations

In 2016, the DLL took on several improvement activities to create a better person centered system. Operational improvements included a growth in DLL staff to answer contacts, and new staff roles focused on staff development, community engagement and reporting. These staffing changes are intended to produce more consistency, higher quality, and for some customers a more intensive service.

- **Created a Statewide Tactical Team**  
In order to support the growing Disability Linkage Line® system and service to including a Quality Assurance Analyst, Staff Development Coordinator, Resource and Reporting Analyst, and Community Engagement Coordinator.
- **Continued to Expand the Disability Linkage Line® network**  
To include focused specialists about work and benefits and a person centered approach for goal setting and complex situations through a follow-along service.
- **Updated the Disability Linkage Line® Mission, Vision and Value**  
In order to reflect current work of Disability Linkage Line® and offer a person centered service, updated the Mission, Vision and Values that were created in 2005.
- **Brand Analysis**  
Contracted with an innovative design firm to evaluate the Disability Linkage Line® name, brand and suite of outreach materials to design a comprehensive visual presence that highlights the mission, vision and values.
- **Built new Contact Management Tool**  
Contracted with a global organization to analyze Disability Linkage Line® work processes with a goal of configuring a new tool that incorporates person-centered layout, more efficient work processes, and greater ease in identifying DLL's impact and customer outcomes. Embed a future planning service framework in the new client tracking tool.
- **Expanded Benefits Planning Service**

Expand the partnership with the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to offer a statewide benefits planning service for people already working with Vocational Rehabilitation.

- Disability Linkage Line® Work and Benefits Planners (WBP) support VR staff with benefits planning technical assistance and support participants with benefits counseling.
- Several DLL staff are embedded in VR offices to offer in-person assistance and strengthen collaboration.

## **Future Improvements**

The initiatives below are efforts to better serve customers and create a system that is more person centered.

- **Establish Web Presence**

Create an online portal for the public to access information about the Disability Linkage Line®. This portal will be the main site, with links to additional customer resources; HB101.org, DB101.org, and MinnesotaHelp.info.

- **Build a Staff Portal**

In conjunction with the public website, create a staff portal with staff resources; protocols and policies, the Standards and Assurances, and access to our Customer Tracking Database.

- **Expand Capabilities of Contact Management Tool**

- **Launch New Name, Brand, and Visual Presence**