



Representative Norris
House Human Services Policy
507 State Office Building St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for HF 2141 – In-house training pilot

Dear Representative Norris, Co-Authors and Members of the House Human Services Policy Committee:

On behalf of Dakota County Community Services, we thank you for including the language introducing the opportunity for counties to pilot the required training within their own county with appropriate approvals.

Dakota County uses group hiring with cohorts of up to twenty new Financial Workers starting at one time. Under the current structure, these cohorts must take courses in whatever order and speed they happen to be occurring, regardless of difficulty of the program, required pre-work, or comprehension. Sometimes a cohort has to be split up between multiple sessions for a particular program due to seat limitations, creating significant coordination challenges for county training staff. These details – the order programs are trained, the amount of time between the trainings, the attendance of colleagues, have a significant impact on the success of the trainings and ability to move towards productive financial workers. County control of the order, timing and schedule of trainings would allow for new financial workers to move through the many program trainings in the most efficient and effective manner possible. County trainers can be responsive to the needs of each cohort and each employee.

Dakota County is currently approved to provide training for General Assistance, Minnesota Supplemental Assistance, Minnesota Family Investment Program, and Diversionary Work Program. Historically, Dakota County trainers have also conducted mandatory trainings for medical assistance and the METS system. These trainings are high quality and have proven positive outcomes. This success can be expanded to more programs.

Making the training available in a more timely manner within a county setting will improve the efficiency and effectiveness, allowing counties to appropriately train staff to respond to record numbers of public assistance cases and respond to the turnover demands we are currently experiencing.

We applaud the work to include these important provisions in HF 2141 and hope that once this has been proven effective this can be made permanent so counties can continue to train and onboard staff in timely, proven manners. Thank you for your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Nadir Abdi

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Director

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