

Subject Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and General Assistance (GA)
Authors Kunesh-Podein and others
Analyst Danyell A. Punelli
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Overview

This bill increases the MFIP and GA cash grants.

MFIP is a jointly funded, federal-state program that provides income assistance to eligible low-income families. MFIP is the state's response to the 1996 federal welfare reform law, which replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), a block grant program to states.

The MFIP grant is based on a transitional standard that increases with family size. For example, a family of three's standard benefit in 2018 was \$984 per month; a family of four's monthly standard was \$1,198. For families without earnings, the monthly grant equals the transitional standard. For families with earnings, the monthly grant equals the "family wage level" (110 percent of the transitional standard minus the family's net earned income).

The MFIP grant is composed of a cash portion and a food portion, both of which are issued by counties in electronic debit card form. The cash portion of the grant has not been increased since 1986. The food portion is adjusted annually when adjustments are made to the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

GA is a state program that provides cash assistance to needy persons who fall into specified statutory categories and who meet the GA eligibility requirements, including income and asset requirements. The GA cash grant has not been increased since 1986.

Summary

Section	Description
1	Standards. Amends § 256D.01, subd. 1a. Removes language requiring the commissioner to set the standard of assistance under GA. Requires the commissioner to adjust cash grants under GA for inflation based on the CPI-U for the prior calendar year, beginning in fiscal year 2020.

Section	Description
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2 MFIP transitional standard.
Amends § 256J.24, subd. 5. Adds paragraph (b), which requires the commissioner to adjust the cash assistance portion of the MFIP transitional standard for inflation based on the CPI-U for the prior calendar year, beginning in fiscal year 2021.

3 Increased GA Grant.
Sets the standard for GA grants, effective July 1, 2019, at \$457 per month for one person and \$914 per month for two people. Currently, the GA grant is \$203 per month for one person and \$260 per month for two people.

4 Increased MFIP Cash Assistance Portion.
Sets the MFIP cash assistance portion of the transitional standard, effective July 1, 2019, as follows:

Number of Eligible People	Current Cash Portion	Proposed Cash Portion
1	\$250	\$562
2	437	1,005
3	532	1,318
4	621	1,605
5	697	1,854
6	773	2,135
7	850	2,325
8	916	2,568
9	980	2,808
10	1,035	3,041
Each additional person	53	230

5 Appropriation.
Appropriates an unspecified amount from the TANF block grant fund to the commissioner of human services for the MFIP and GA cash grant increases (federal regulations don't allow TANF to be used for the GA program).



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