



Welfare/MFIP Fact Sheet, 2003

44,980 families received Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) grants in December 2002—published in the Minnesota Department of Human Services MFIP Monthly Report.

In December 2002:

- Most caregivers on MFIP were in their twenties (47 percent) or thirties (29 percent), while nearly a tenth were teens and fewer than 200 were 60 years or older.
- Most eligible adults were women; fewer than one-fifth were men.
- 41% of eligible adults lacked high school credentials.
- 58% of all eligible adults were listed as having never been married.
- Whites were the largest racial/ethnic group among adults eligible for MFIP (48%); blacks were the second largest (32%); and Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian each accounted for fewer than 10% of the caseload.

Facts from the Minnesota Department of Human Services —
Characteristics of December 2002 MFIP Cases and Eligible Adults

The MFIP caseload is dynamic. The families on MFIP today are not the same families who were on MFIP yesterday.

MFIP Cases in December 1997:	45,420
MFIP Cases in December 2000:	40,761
MFIP Cases in December 2002:	44,980
Cases leaving MFIP (Jan. 1998 – Nov. 2002):	99,939
Cases entering MFIP (Jan. 1998 – Nov. 2002):	101,589

Overall, the caseload dropped 3,000 over the first 2½ years of MFIP and began to rise in 2001 and 2002 due to the failing economy. But over the last 5 years, close to 100,000 families moved off the program and thousands more applied for and received MFIP benefits. During this period, more than 150,000 different Minnesota families have used MFIP as a temporary safety net and as a launching pad to return to the labor force.

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MFIP participants use the program as a temporary safety net. MFIP participants are working. Families are on MFIP for a short period of time to resolve crises, gain stability in their family and find employment that supports their family. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has studied how long it takes for MFIP families to be “self supporting.” DHS defines the “Self Support Index” as those MFIP participants who are off cash assistance or working 30 hours per week.

For MFIP recipients (those who had been on MFIP before the quarter (Jan-March 1999),

- More than half (51%) were off cash assistance or working 30 hours per week within 1 year.
- More than 65% had reached this self support threshold within 2 years.
- A full 70% were working 30 hours per week or off MFIP cash within 3 years.

POLICY CHANGES OF THE 2003 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MFIP changes included in the Governor’s budget proposal:

- New applicants for MFIP would be required to look for a job for 4 months before they could receive cash assistance.
- A family’s cash grant would not be increased if the family had more children while on MFIP.
- Education for MFIP participants would be limited to one year (rather than two) and recipients would be ineligible to participate in any education or training unless they were working 25 hours per week.
- Families can stay on the program until their wages reach 115% of the federal poverty guidelines, rather than 120%, and a family could be terminated from all cash assistance and supports for non-compliance.
- A number of programs (MFIP employment services, emergency assistance, supported work, work literacy, refugee cash management, parents fair share) would be consolidated into a block grant to counties.
- Continue cash and food assistance to legal immigrants beyond June 2003. These services had been set to expire on June 30, 2003.