



Minnesota Department of **Human Services** \_\_\_\_\_

**At the Limit:  
December 2005 Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)  
Cases that Reached the 60 Month Time Limit**

Minnesota Department of Human Services  
Program Assessment and Integrity Division  
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## Introduction

With passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 and its creation of Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), cash assistance to poor families was no longer guaranteed. Among other requirements, the PRWORA mandated a lifetime limit of 60 months for receipt of cash assistance. The PRWORA legislation allowed states to create their own TANF programs within certain guidelines. Minnesota implemented the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and started counting months of cash assistance receipt toward that limit in July 1997. June 2002 was the first month a case could have reached its 60<sup>th</sup> counted month with months entirely in Minnesota; cases could have reached 60 months earlier if they had months counted in other states. Other states enacted shorter limits and some states started counting months as early as September 1996, the earliest allowed under PRWORA.

### **Federal and State Time Limit Exceptions, Exemptions, and Extensions**

Under PRWORA the federal government allowed certain exceptions from the time limit and states were allowed to create state-funded exceptions, exemptions, and extensions beyond 60 months for documented hardships. An exception is a month that is not counted toward the limit. The federal government provides exceptions for families that live in Indian Country with a not-employed rate of at least 50 percent and participants experiencing family violence who are cooperating with an employment plan. Minnesota provides additional exceptions for persons aged 60 or older, minor parents complying with educational requirements, and 18 or 19-year old parents complying with high school education requirements.

A case may receive a future exemption in the form of a month counted toward the limit but is “banked.” These banked months are credited back after the case reaches its 60<sup>th</sup> month. Hence, if a case is using a banked month it is using a credit that was received at an earlier time when the caregiver met the exemption criteria. Cases can receive a banked month if an adult or child meets certain special medical criteria that prevents otherwise work-eligible caregivers from participating in work activities.

States were also allowed to provide TANF-funded extensions for up to 20 percent of their caseloads for documented hardships. Minnesota provides extensions for persons experiencing an illness lasting more than 30 days, mental illness, and other hardships.

### **Other Months Not Counted Toward the Time Limit**

Under some circumstances, MFIP months are not counted toward the limit. Child-only cases are cases where caregivers are not eligible for MFIP, but whose children continue to receive a cash grant under MFIP or cases where children who are cared for by relatives who are not personally MFIP eligible. The most common reason for caregiver ineligibility is receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for a disability.

Months are also not counted for “MFIP Food-only” cases. MFIP includes both a cash grant and a food portion that can only be spent on food. A federal waiver allows Minnesota to

provide Food Support<sup>1</sup> to households receiving MFIP as a combined program. As families work their way toward leaving assistance, their cash grant is decreased first so that some families only receive a food portion. Caregivers can also opt out of the cash portion, receiving only the food portion, and those months do not count toward their lifetime limit.

### **Previous Department of Human Services Reports on the Time Limit**

Since PRWORA was enacted, there has been increasing interest about what happens to families once they can no longer receive cash assistance from MFIP. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has examined this issue, beginning with the report, *The Welfare Time Limit: A survey of families who lost MFIP eligibility as a result of the five-year time limit*,<sup>2</sup> which looked at the very first families affected by the lifetime limit. DHS also conducted a longitudinal study of MFIP-recipients and studied a subset of participants with long-term cash assistance cases, titled *Minnesota Family Investment Program Longitudinal Study: Approaching the 60-Month Time Limit*.<sup>3</sup>

This report is the first in a series of annual reports that focuses on a one-month snapshot of cases at their lifetime limit. It looks at two groups: 1) cases that already have 60 counted months and continue to receive MFIP, and 2) cases that reached their 60<sup>th</sup> counted month in the report month, December 2005. It identifies the total number of adults made ineligible due to the time limit, compares the characteristics of eligible adults that have reached their lifetime limit to those with less than 60 months, and gives the reasons that those in the first group continue to receive MFIP, the counties where these families reside, what happens to families in relation to MFIP in the month after they reach month 60, and outcomes for these families in their first six months after reaching the time limit.

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<sup>1</sup> Food Support is Minnesota's federal Food Stamps program.

<sup>2</sup> This report is available at <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfsrver/Legacy/DM-0176-ENG>.

<sup>3</sup> This report is available at <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfsrver/Legacy/DHS-4450G-ENG>.

## What You Need to Know About MFIP Cases that Have Reached the 60-Month Time Limit

- A total of 9,019 adults had reached the 60-month time limit as of December 2005. Of those, 60 percent (5,469 adults) were ineligible and had their cases closed prior to December 2005 due to the 60-month time limit. The other 40 percent had been extended, were Child-only, or remained open for other reasons.
- In December 2005, 3,640 cases had reached their 60-month lifetime limit and were still receiving MFIP cash or food payments. Two-thirds of these were in extension due to a documented hardship. The others were Child-only cases, received only the MFIP food portion, used a banked month, or were in their 60<sup>th</sup> counted month. Cases with 60 months constituted 10 percent of the total statewide MFIP caseload.
- Large racial disparities exist between MFIP-eligible adults with 60 counted months and both the larger MFIP population and Minnesota's statewide population. Of the 3,044 eligible adults<sup>4</sup> with 60 months, 50 percent were black, compared to 34 percent of MFIP-eligible adults with less than 60 months. Eighty-eight percent of these black adults were African American and the rest were African immigrants.
- Eligible adults that reached the 60-month time limit faced significant mental and chemical health challenges. Half of the eligible adults had a severe mental health diagnosis made at some time during 2003 to 2005, compared to one-quarter of eligible adults with less than 60 months. One-quarter had a chemical dependency diagnosis made during 2003 to 2005, compared to less than one-fifth of eligible adults with fewer than 60 months.
- One hundred thirty-three cases reached their 60<sup>th</sup> month in December 2005. In January 2006, the month after they reached the time limit, 46 percent had been extended and 41 percent had their MFIP cases closed. In the remaining cases the caregiver with 60 months became ineligible and another caregiver with fewer months remained eligible, the case used a banked month, or the case was extended in error.
- Of the 133 cases that reached their lifetime limit in December 2005, 44 percent had wages reported to Minnesota Unemployment Insurance (UI) system in the second quarter after reaching their 60<sup>th</sup> month (April to June 2006).

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<sup>4</sup> There are fewer eligible adults than total cases included in this report due to the 652 MFIP Child-only cases, which have no MFIP-eligible adults. Because some cases had more than one eligible caregiver, the number of cases minus eligible adults does not equal the number of Child-only cases.

## MFIP-Eligible Adults Who Have 60 Counted Months

### Data Highlights: Table 1 and Table 1a

- Compared to eligible adults with fewer than 60 months, eligible adults that had reached the time limit were more likely to be female, black, and have a chemical or mental health diagnosis. They were also older, with an average age of 36 as compared to an average age of 30 for adults with fewer than 60 months, which is not surprising as it takes time to accumulate counted months. (Table 1)
- Eligible adults who reached the time limit had education levels similar to eligible adults with fewer than 60 months. For example, 58 percent of adults with 60 months had a high school diploma compared to 57 percent of adults with less than 60 months. The two groups also had similar marital statuses, 60 percent and 62 percent, respectively, had never married.
- Eligible adults with 60 months were more likely to be United States citizens than those with fewer than 60 months (88 percent compared to 83 percent), which was expected as many immigrants have been in the United States for less than five years.
- Eligible adults with 60 months were much more likely to have had a chemical dependency or severe mental health diagnosis made in the previous three years than caregivers in cases with less than 60 months. Half of MFIP-eligible adults with 60 months had received a severe mental health diagnosis and one-quarter had received a chemical dependency diagnosis during 2003 to 2005. The percentage of *all* caregivers, both eligible and ineligible, on cases with 60 months with these diagnoses was 72 percent for severe mental health and 33 percent for chemical dependency.<sup>5</sup>
- MFIP-eligible adults with a severe mental health diagnosis made between 2003 and 2005 were disproportionately white as compared to the proportion of whites in all cases with 60 counted months (Table 1a). White eligible adults were 28 percent of all caregivers with 60 counted months, but were 36 percent of those with a severe mental health diagnosis. Black adults were most likely to have had a severe mental health diagnosis made during 2003 to 2005 (45 percent of eligible adults with such a diagnosis), which was a slightly smaller proportion than their prevalence in all cases with 60 months.

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<sup>5</sup> While this measure is considered an underestimate of the actual incidence of mental and chemical health disorders because it only includes people who received publicly paid health care that is recorded in administrative methods, adults nearing 60 months may be more likely to receive a diagnosis for an existing condition because of more intensive case reviews by county workers at 48 counted months.

**Table 1. Characteristics of MFIP-Eligible Adults in December 2005 by Whether They Had 60 Counted Months**

Characteristics of MFIP-Eligible Adults		MFIP-Eligible Adults with 60 Months		MFIP-Eligible Adults with 1 to 59 Counted Months	
		Count of Persons	Percent	Count of Persons	Percent
Total		3,044	100.0%	25,610	100.0%
Gender	Male	307	10.1%	5,258	20.5%
	Female	2,737	89.9%	20,352	79.5%
Age	19 and younger	0	0.0%	2,781	10.9%
	20 to 29	844	27.7%	12,609	49.2%
	30 to 39	1,301	42.7%	6,170	24.1%
	40 to 49	737	24.2%	3,021	11.8%
	50 to 59	158	5.2%	837	3.3%
	60 and older	4	0.1%	192	0.7%
	Mean	35.5		29.3	
	Median	34		27	
	Minimum	22		13	
	Maximum	62		81	
Race	Asian	302	9.9%	2,277	8.9%
	Black	1,516	49.8%	8,694	33.9%
	American Indian	224	7.4%	2,562	10.0%
	Hispanic	114	3.7%	1,327	5.2%
	White	865	28.4%	10,327	40.3%
	Multiple/Unknown	23	0.8%	423	1.7%
Asian Subgroups	Asian American	24	0.8%	300	1.2%
	Hmong	244	8.0%	1,768	6.9%
	Other Asian Immigrant	34	1.1%	209	0.8%
Black Subgroups	African American	1,332	43.8%	6,387	24.9%
	Somali	141	4.6%	1,614	6.3%
	Other African Immigrant	43	1.4%	693	2.7%
Education	Less than 1st Grade/Unknown	176	5.8%	2,135	8.3%
	Grade School	112	3.7%	643	2.5%
	Some High School	989	32.5%	8,292	32.4%
	High School Graduate	1,501	49.3%	12,348	48.2%
	Some Post-Secondary	242	8.0%	1,820	7.1%
	College Graduate	13	0.4%	210	0.8%
	Graduate Degree	11	0.4%	162	0.6%
	High School or Greater	1,767	58.0%	14,540	56.8%
Marital Status	Divorced	271	8.9%	1,704	6.7%
	Legally Separated	8	0.3%	58	0.2%
	Married, Living Apart	438	14.4%	3,109	12.1%
	Married, Living Together	469	15.4%	4,579	17.9%
	Never Married	1,812	59.5%	15,955	62.3%
	Widowed	46	1.5%	205	0.8%
Citizenship Status	US Citizen	2,688	88.3%	21,230	82.9%
	Non-Citizen	356	11.7%	4,380	17.1%
Chemical Dependency Diagnosis	During 2005	469	15.4%	2,698	10.5%
	During 2003 to 2005	743	24.4%	4,586	17.9%
Severe Mental Health Diagnosis	During 2005	1,078	35.4%	4,694	18.3%
	During 2003 to 2005	1,405	46.2%	6,536	25.5%

**Table 1a. Race/Ethnicity of December 2005 MFIP-Eligible Adults with a Severe Mental Health Diagnosis**

	Total Eligible Adults with 60 Months		Persons with a Severe Mental Health Diagnosis, 2003 to 2005	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Asian	302	9.9%	83	5.9%
Black	1,516	49.8%	635	45.2%
American Indian	224	7.4%	120	8.5%
Hispanic	114	3.7%	49	3.5%
White	865	28.4%	502	35.7%
Multiple/Unknown	23	0.8%	16	1.1%
Total Persons	3,044	100.0%	1,405	100.0%

**Data Highlights: Table 2**

- The most common reason that a case continued to receive MFIP benefits after reaching its 60<sup>th</sup> month was an extension (67 percent of the 3,640 cases). Another 18 percent were Child-only cases, which means that caregivers in these cases became ineligible while in extension or reapplied when they met criteria for a Child-only case after the case was closed for the time limit. The most common reason was that the caregiver became eligible for SSI due to a disability. This 18 percent of cases with 60 counted months (652 cases) represented 6 percent of all MFIP Child-only cases. Ten percent of cases with more than 60 months were receiving only the food portion of MFIP due to income great enough as to result in a grant of zero dollars or recoupment of previous overpayments<sup>6</sup>. A total of 3,512 cases were Food-only cases in December 2005, 9 percent of these had 60 counted months.
- Half of extended cases in December 2005 were extended due to an illness or incapacitation lasting more than 30 days or to care for a family member that was ill or incapacitated. Nineteen percent had been extended due to an IQ between 70 and 80 and 13 percent due to mental illness.
- The average number of months that extended cases had been in extension was 21 months. Thirty-six percent had been in extension for less than one year, while 14 percent had been in extension for more than three years.
- Twenty-eight percent of cases had at least one caregiver with paid employment which was less than the overall MFIP caseload, including cases with less than 60 months (33 percent of all cases).
- One hundred thirty-three cases received MFIP for the 60<sup>th</sup> counted month in December. These cases will be examined more closely later in this paper.

<sup>6</sup> These cases had been receiving MFIP cash due to an extension, but received no cash payment in the report month due to income or the payment had been recouped due to overpayment.



**Table 2. Cases that Had 60 Counted Months: Reason for Continued Eligibility in December 2005**

MFIP Cases with 60 Months		Count of Cases	Percent
Number of Cases and Percent of Total MFIP		3,640	10.4%
MFIP-Eligibility Reason with Percent of 60-Month Cases	Extended Case	2,441	67.1%
	Child-only Case	652	17.9%
	MFIP Food-only	342	9.4%
	60th Counted Month	133	3.7%
	Banked Month	72	2.0%
Extended Cases: Total Extended Cases		2,441	100.0%
Extension Reason in December 2005	Ill or Incapacitated More than 30 Days	627	25.7%
	Care of Ill or Incapacitated Relative	623	25.5%
	IQ Between 70 and 80	457	18.7%
	Mentally Ill	318	13.0%
	One Caregiver Employed 30 Hours or More	149	6.1%
	Domestic Violence	82	3.4%
	Unemployable	68	2.8%
	Learning Disabled	68	2.8%
	IQ Less than 70	22	0.9%
	Extended in Error	19	0.8%
	Appeal of MFIP Closure	5	0.2%
Two Caregivers Employed 55 Hours or More		3	0.1%
Extended Cases: Number of Extension Months	1 to 12	881	36.1%
	13 to 24	667	27.3%
	25 to 36	561	23.0%
	37 or More	332	13.6%
	Mean	20.6	
Median	20		
Maximum	51		
Paid Work	Cases with at Least One Caregiver with Paid Work	1,028	28.2%

## Cases that Have 60 Counted Months: County Data

### Data Highlights: Tables 3, 4, and 5

- Ramsey County had the greatest number of cases with 60 counted months (Table 3); 18 percent of Ramsey County's MFIP cases had 60 counted months and Ramsey County had 41 percent of all cases with 60 counted months statewide. Eleven percent of Hennepin County MFIP cases had 60 counted months which was 32 percent of all cases with 60 months statewide.
- In each of Minnesota's largest counties the most common reason for continued eligibility after 60 counted months was an extension (Table 4). In Anoka, Beltrami, Dakota, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, St. Louis, and Washington Counties, between 55 percent and 77 percent of cases with 60 counted months were extended. Anoka County had the largest percentage of cases with 60 counted months still open due to an extension and Beltrami County the smallest percentage among these largest counties.
- Across these large counties, between 21 percent and 36 percent of cases with 60 counted months had at least one caregiver with paid employment. Twenty-nine percent of cases in Ramsey County and 23 percent of caregivers in Hennepin County had at least one working caregiver.
- The most common extension reasons in most of the largest counties were being ill or incapacitated or caring for an ill or incapacitated relative (Table 5); between 34 percent and 66 percent of extended cases in the largest counties were extended for one of these two reasons. In Ramsey County, equal percentages (34 percent) of extended cases were either ill or incapacitated or caring for an ill or incapacitated relative and extended for having an IQ between 70 and 80.

**Table 3. Servicing County of December 2005 Cases that Had 60 Counted Months**

Service County	Cases with 60 Counted Months		Service County	Cases with 60 Counted Months	
	Count of Cases	Percent of Total MFIP Cases within county		Count of Cases	Percent of Total MFIP Cases within county
Aitkin	3	2.8%	Martin	5	4.8%
Anoka	190	11.4%	Meeker	4	4.7%
Becker	16	5.1%	Mille Lacs	6	2.8%
Beltrami	33	2.6%	Morrison	2	2.3%
Benton	14	7.8%	Mower	4	1.9%
Big Stone	3	13.6%	Murray	0	0.0%
Blue Earth	18	6.7%	Nicollet	5	3.5%
Brown	2	3.0%	Nobles	2	2.0%
Carlton	10	5.1%	Norman	0	0.0%
Carver	5	4.4%	Olmsted	21	2.9%
Cass	25	6.4%	Otter Tail	6	3.2%
Chippewa	1	1.7%	Pennington	1	1.4%
Chisago	10	6.1%	Pine	8	4.4%
Clay	28	9.2%	Pipestone	1	2.0%
Clearwater	7	7.9%	Polk	17	8.5%
Cook	1	7.7%	Pope	1	3.2%
Cottonwood	3	5.8%	Ramsey	1,495	18.2%
Crow Wing	16	4.9%	Red Lake	1	6.7%
Dakota	92	6.8%	Redwood	7	10.8%
Dodge	1	2.9%	Renville	5	6.3%
Douglas	6	5.6%	Rice	6	2.2%
Faribault	2	4.7%	Rock	0	0.0%
Fillmore	1	1.8%	Roseau	0	0.0%
Freeborn	5	2.7%	St Louis	149	9.4%
Goodhue	11	7.1%	Scott	20	8.1%
Grant	3	20.0%	Sherburne	7	3.7%
Hennepin	1,148	11.0%	Sibley	1	2.1%
Houston	1	1.3%	Stearns	32	5.6%
Hubbard	6	5.6%	Steele	5	3.5%
Isanti	5	3.9%	Stevens	0	0.0%
Itasca	23	8.6%	Swift	2	7.4%
Jackson	0	0.0%	Todd	3	2.7%
Kanabec	2	2.1%	Traverse	1	10.0%
Kandiyohi	9	3.1%	Wabasha	1	1.9%
Kittson	0	0.0%	Wadena	2	1.8%
Koochiching	4	4.1%	Waseca	7	6.8%
Lac Qui Parle	1	6.7%	Washington	44	7.3%
Lake	3	13.6%	Watonwan	0	0.0%
Lake of the Woods	0	0.0%	Wilkin	1	6.7%
Le Sueur	1	1.2%	Winona	22	10.9%
Lincoln	1	14.3%	Wright	7	3.3%
Lyon	10	9.9%	Yellow Medicine	1	4.5%
Mcleod	2	2.1%	Statewide Total	3,640	10.4%
Mahnomen	14	9.3%			
Marshall	2	7.4%			

**Table 4. Cases that Had 60 Months: Eligibility Reason and Cases with a Working Caregiver by Large County**

	Total Cases with 60 Counted Months	Eligibility Reason					One or More Working Caregivers
		Extended	Child-only	Food-only	Counted Month	Banked Month	
All Cases with 60 Months	3,640 100.0%	2,441 67.1%	652 17.9%	342 9.4%	133 3.7%	72 2.0%	1,028 28.2%
Anoka	190 100.0%	146 76.8%	29 15.3%	11 5.8%	3 1.6%	1 0.5%	54 28.4%
Beltrami	33 100.0%	18 54.5%	9 27.3%	4 12.1%	1 3.0%	1 3.0%	7 21.2%
Dakota	92 100.0%	58 63.0%	20 21.7%	4 4.3%	8 8.7%	2 2.2%	31 33.7%
Hennepin	1,148 100.0%	704 61.3%	248 21.6%	103 9.0%	60 5.2%	33 2.9%	266 23.2%
Olmsted	21 100.0%	12 57.1%	6 28.6%	1 4.8%	0 0.0%	2 9.5%	6 28.6%
Ramsey	1,495 100.0%	1,074 71.8%	232 15.5%	146 9.8%	33 2.2%	10 0.7%	429 28.7%
St. Louis	149 100.0%	101 67.8%	23 15.4%	16 10.7%	6 4.0%	3 2.0%	46 30.9%
Washington	44 100.0%	28 63.6%	6 13.6%	4 9.1%	5 11.4%	1 2.3%	16 36.4%
All Other Counties	468 100.0%	300 64.1%	79 16.9%	53 11.3%	22 4.7%	14 3.0%	173 37.0%

**Table 5. Extended Cases: Extension Reason and Extension Months by Large County**

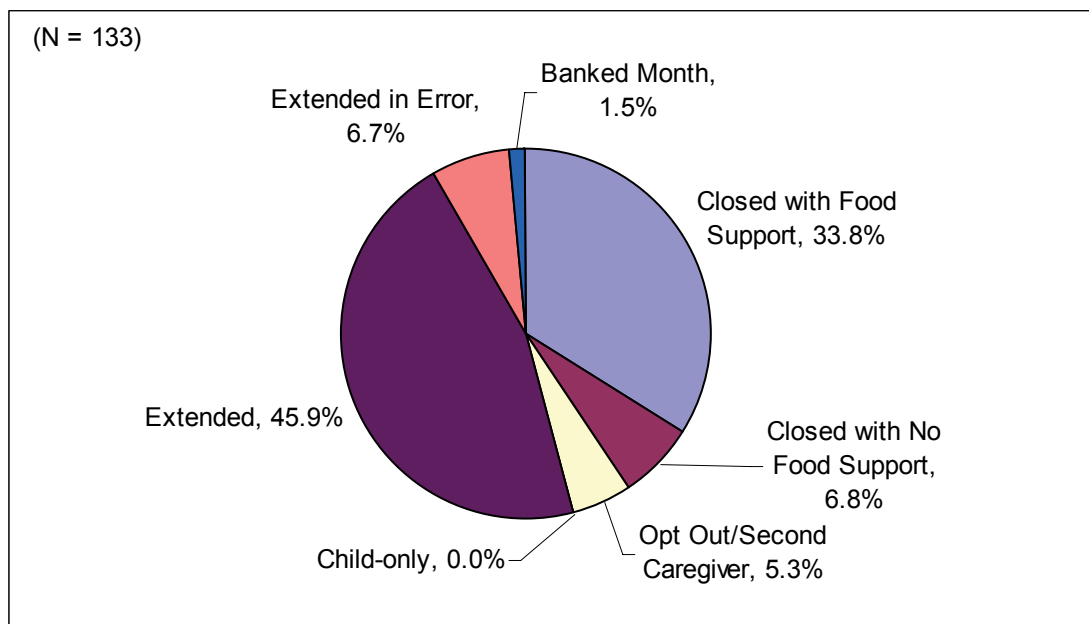
	Total Extended Cases	Extension Reason					Extension Months			
		Ill or Incapacitated	Care of Ill or Incapacitated	IQ Between 70 & 80	Mentally Ill	Other	1 to 12	13 to 24	25 to 36	37 or More
All Extended Cases	2,441 100.0%	627 25.7%	623 25.5%	457 18.7%	318 13.0%	416 17.0%	864 35.4%	667 27.3%	561 23.0%	332 13.6%
Anoka	146 100.0%	55 37.7%	38 26.0%	14 9.6%	23 15.8%	16 11.0%	64 43.8%	45 30.8%	27 18.5%	10 6.8%
Beltrami	18 100.0%	5 27.8%	2 11.1%	1 5.6%	2 11.1%	8 44.4%	6 33.3%	7 38.9%	3 16.7%	2 11.1%
Dakota	58 100.0%	10 17.2%	22 37.9%	8 13.8%	10 17.2%	8 13.8%	20 34.5%	20 34.5%	16 27.6%	2 3.4%
Hennepin	704 100.0%	253 35.9%	210 29.8%	46 6.5%	45 6.4%	150 21.3%	236 33.5%	179 25.4%	172 24.4%	104 14.8%
Olmsted	12 100.0%	4 33.3%	3 25.0%	0 0.0%	2 16.7%	3 25.0%	8 66.7%	3 25.0%	0 0.0%	1 8.3%
Ramsey	1,074 100.0%	148 13.8%	217 20.2%	369 34.4%	198 18.4%	142 13.2%	340 31.7%	298 27.7%	269 25.0%	167 15.5%
St. Louis	101 100.0%	46 45.5%	15 14.9%	4 4.0%	12 11.9%	24 23.8%	39 38.6%	28 27.7%	17 16.8%	17 16.8%
Washington	28 100.0%	9 32.1%	4 14.3%	4 14.3%	3 10.7%	8 28.6%	11 39.3%	9 32.1%	5 17.9%	3 10.7%
All Other Counties	300 100.0%	97 32.3%	112 37.3%	11 3.7%	23 7.7%	57 19.0%	143 47.7%	78 26.0%	51 17.0%	26 8.7%

## Cases at the Time Limit: MFIP Cases that Reached their 60<sup>th</sup> Counted Month in December 2005

The remainder of this report focuses on the 133 MFIP cases that had 59 months in November 2005 and reached their 60<sup>th</sup> counted month in December 2005.

Figure 2 shows the status of these 133 cases in January 2006, the month after they reached their 60<sup>th</sup> month. Case eligibility status could change in the months following, as shown in Table 6, which shows case outcomes in the six months following reaching the time limit. Cases frequently move between eligibility reasons, for example, using a banked month and then becoming Child-only due to caregiver ineligibility and later closing.

**Figure 2. What Happened Next? Disposition of Cases that Reached 60 Months in December 2005: January 2006 Case Status**



## Data Highlights: Table 6

- All of the 133 MFIP cases that reached their 60<sup>th</sup> counted month in December 2005 continued to receive Medical Assistance (MA) for at least one person at some time between January and June 2006.
- Eight percent of the cases were in sanction during their 60<sup>th</sup> counted month which means that the case can never be extended.
- Sixty-four percent of the cases that reached their time limit in December 2005 received at least one month of MFIP in the next six months, with 46 percent receiving MFIP in all of the next six months. In addition to extended cases, these include cases that used banked months, became Child-only<sup>7</sup> or Food-only<sup>8</sup>, had a second caregiver with fewer than 60 months, or other eligibility reasons.
- Fifty-eight percent of the cases were extended on MFIP in at least one month between January and June 2006 and 32 percent received an extension in all of the next six months. The average case with extended months was extended for 4.8 months between January and June 2006.
- Just more than two-thirds of the cases received Food Support independent of MFIP in at least one month between January and June 2006. One-third received Food Support in all of the next six months. On average, these cases received 4.5 months of Food Support between January and June 2006.
- During the second quarter after December 2005 (April to June), 44 percent of the cases that reached their time limit in December 2005 had wages reported to Minnesota's Unemployment Insurance (UI) system. The average quarterly wage amount for cases with wages was \$2,751 or about an average of \$917 per month<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> A case cannot become a Child-only case because the caregiver reached 60 counted months. Child-only cases with 60 counted months are cases where the caregiver either was in extension or reapplied after becoming ineligible for another reason, most often becoming eligible for SSI.

<sup>8</sup> A case with 60 counted months can become a Food-only case if the case has sufficient income to decrease the grant to zero dollars or if their cash grant is being recouped for previous overpayments.

<sup>9</sup> UI wage data are reported by quarter. When dividing into monthly income, be aware that the income could have been earned in any month during the quarter rather than evenly divided across all three months.

**Table 6. The First Six Months after the Time Limit: Assistance Programs and Reported Wages for Cases that Reached the 60<sup>th</sup> Month in December 2005**

Cases at the 60 Month Time Limit		Count of Cases	Percent
Cases with 59 Months in November and 60 Months in December 2005		133	100.0%
Cases in Sanction During December 2005		11	8.3%
Any MA-Eligible Persons During January to June 2006		133	100.0%
Any Food Support or MFIP-Eligible Months During January to June 2006		133	100.0%
Number of MFIP Eligible Months (Includes all reasons for eligibility beyond 60 months)	0	47	35.3%
	1	3	2.3%
	2	7	5.3%
	3	3	2.3%
	4	8	6.0%
	5	4	3.0%
	6	61	45.9%
		Mean	5.1
	Median	6	
Number of MFIP Extended Months	0	56	42.1%
	1	5	3.8%
	2	9	6.8%
	3	4	3.0%
	4	8	6.0%
	5	8	6.0%
	6	43	32.3%
		Mean	4.8
	Median	6	
Number of Food Support Eligible Months (Stand-alone Food Support only)	0	41	30.8%
	1	7	5.3%
	2	7	5.3%
	3	15	11.3%
	4	8	6.0%
	5	13	9.8%
	6	42	31.6%
		Mean	4.5
	Median	5	
Unemployment Insurance Wages in Quarter After 60th MFIP Month	Yes	58	43.6%
	No	75	56.4%
Mean Wages Quarter Two 2006, if any		\$2,751	

## Table Notes and Definitions

Counted MFIP months were defined as the maximum number of counted eligibility months for TANF and/or MFIP between September 1996 and December 2005 of any eligible adult on the case. Minnesota started counting TANF months in July 1997, while several other states started counting earlier, some as early as September 1996. Totals in this report include time from other states. Minnesota counted months can be fewer than federally counted months because in the past Minnesota has funded more types of time limit exemptions.

An “eligible adult” is an adult caregiver or minor parent who meets MFIP eligibility requirements and receives an MFIP grant. Cases receiving MFIP are known as “paid cases”; this excludes active cases suspended for the month because they have income great enough to cancel out the cash grant. This typically occurs in months with five weekly or three biweekly pay periods.

### Table 1

Data include only MFIP-eligible adults. Child-only cases were not included in this table.

Characteristics with no bearing on program eligibility may not be routinely updated after the initial application, including education, marital status, and citizenship. Thus, high school graduation and U.S. citizenship attainment may be underreported.

The coding method for race/ethnicity follows the 2000 U.S. Census methodology, with participants asked their racial choice (yes or no) for each of five racial categories (American Indian, Asian, black, Pacific Islander, and white) and ethnicity (Hispanic or non-Hispanic). For this report, Asian and Pacific Islander categories were combined due to small numbers of Pacific Islanders. Hispanic persons of all races were reported as Hispanic.

The two largest immigrant groups in Minnesota are Hmong and Somali. To describe these important subgroups and compare their outcomes, Asians were subdivided into Hmong (identified by declared nationality or preferred language and race), non-Hmong Asian immigrants, and non-immigrant Asian American citizens. Blacks were subdivided into Somali (also identified by nationality or language and race), non-Somali black immigrants, and non-immigrant African American citizens.

A severe mental health diagnosis identifies eligible adults who were known to have been diagnosed with psychosis, depression, personality disorder, post-traumatic stress syndrome, or anxiety state during 2005 or during the three-year period from 2003 to 2005. Chemical dependency diagnosis identifies eligible adults who received that diagnosis (excepting tobacco) during 2005 or during the three-year period 2003 to 2005. Both of these measures may underestimate the actual number of adults with these diagnoses because these only include cases that received publicly paid health care that is recorded in administrative records. On the other hand, these diagnoses may be a secondary diagnosis and do not indicate whether treatment services were received.

### Table 2

An MFIP case can be extended beyond the 60-month lifetime limit if a hardship that is a permitted extension has been documented or there is employment of a given number of hours per month. Cases in sanction for not being in compliance with Employment Services (ES) or child support in month 60 can never be extended.

A Child-only MFIP cases is a case where the caregiver is ineligible for MFIP, but the children are eligible for a cash grant and food portion. The most common reasons for caregiver ineligibility are receipt of SSI, being a relative caregiver, or lack of documents that prove U.S. citizenship. These months are not counted toward the time limit. A case cannot become a Child-only case because the caregiver reached 60 counted months. If the caregiver has accumulated 60 months and subsequently meets the criteria for becoming a Child-only case, then the children may be eligible for MFIP.

MFIP provides both a cash grant and a food portion that may only be spent on food. As caregivers increase income, the cash grant is reduced first, leaving only a food portion. Months in which a case receives only the food portion are not counted toward the time limit.



Counted months are active, paid months that were counted toward the time limit. This report includes a small number of cases that were in a counted month because the case was in its 60<sup>th</sup> counted in December 2005.

Total income was either actual or projected December 2005 income of eligible adults and other adults whose earnings were deemed for the cases. The amount used was either verified earnings for December 2005 or zero for cases still active in February 2006 with no income reported for December 2005 (required to be reported by February 2006) or prospective December 2005 income for new cases with retrospective data missing and for all migrant cases. Total income was gross income except for the self-employed where it was gross less expenses, with a minimum of zero.

### **Table 3**

Servicing county is the county in which the case received service in December 2005.

### **Tables 4 and 5**

Refer to notes for Table 2.

### **Figure 2**

Food Support is the name for Minnesota's federal Food Stamp program.

Counted months are assigned to an individual person so in some instances a caregiver may reach 60 months while another eligible caregiver in the household has fewer months or has an extension reason. The caregiver that has reached the time limit and does not have an extension reason may opt out of the case, resulting in the case having fewer than 60 months.

### **Table 6**

Medical Assistance (MA) is a person-based, rather than a household-based program. The count of cases with an MA-eligible person includes cases that had one or more MA-eligible persons in any month between June and January 2006.

Food Support eligibility months include cases that were MFIP-eligible with one or more persons in the assistance unit that were ineligible for MFIP yet were eligible for Food Support (known as Uncle Harry Cases in Minnesota).

Employers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) system (which excludes federal government, religious, and seasonal workers) must report wages to the state. Employment in other states or for cash is not included in UI data. The table provides second quarter 2006 (the second quarter after cases reached month 60) wages reported for participants' jobs covered by UI in Minnesota as a measure of earnings and labor market attachment.

Averages and medians do not include cases with zero eligibility months or wages.