



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

# Bulletin

**NUMBER**

#14-68-19

**DATE**

November 26, 2014

**OF INTEREST TO**

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors  
and Staff

American Indian Tribes

**ACTION/DUE DATE**

Please read information and  
prepare for implementation

**EXPIRATION DATE**

November 26, 2016

## **Introduction to the Human Services Performance Management System**

**TOPIC**

Human Services Performance Management System.

**PURPOSE**

To provide background and explain the Performance  
Management system.

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**SIGNED**

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**TERMINOLOGY NOTICE**

The terminology used to describe people we serve has  
changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human  
Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

## What is the Human Services Performance Management System?

The Human Services Performance Management System supports counties in the delivery of essential human services and the achievement of outcomes for people in Minnesota. The Performance Management system:

- Uses measures to demonstrate performance related to outcomes.
- Holds counties accountable for performance through the “remedies process.”
- Monitors county progress in meeting performance goals.
- Provides non-programmatic technical assistance and training to counties for performance improvement.
- Maintains an inclusive process, which includes diverse perspectives, in all aspects of the work.

## What are the Vision, Mission, and Values of the Performance Management system?

**Vision:** An equitable human services system that ensures effective services and positive outcomes for Minnesota residents through accountability, continuous improvement, cultural responsiveness, and partnership.

**Mission:** The mission of the Human Services Performance Management system is to improve outcomes for people through creativity, flexibility, accountability, collaboration, and performance management.

### Values:

- **Collaboration:** DHS, counties, service delivery authorities, and community partners are working together to improve the lives of people served.
- **Continuous improvement:** Performance is continuously improved, and success is gauged by results for people served.
- **Reliance on data:** Reliable and tested data, measures, and thresholds are developed and used.
- **Sustainability:** Improvement methods are sustainable, effective, efficient, and continuous.
- **Flexibility:** Flexibility and creativity are used to adapt to the changing needs of those served.
- **Transparency:** Transparency and accountability are central to the design, implementation, and monitoring of essential services being delivered.
- **Inclusiveness:** People of all backgrounds are included in the process, and cultural responsiveness is embedded in the work.
- **Equity:** Equity across populations will be a deliberate and intentional focus so that people will have access to services that are effective for them as individuals.

## How Did the Performance Management System Begin?

The 2009 Minnesota Legislature passed the State-County Results, Accountability and Service Delivery Reform Act (Act), which established the Steering Committee on Performance and Outcome Reforms. The steering committee’s purpose was:

- To define a list of essential human services as mandated by federal or state government;
- To establish minimum outcome standards (thresholds) for those services; and
- To develop a data collection and review process.

During the 2013 legislative session, the Minnesota Legislature established a performance management system for essential human services that included outcomes, initial performance measures, and standards<sup>1</sup> consistent with the recommendations of the steering committee.

## What is the Human Services Performance Council?

The Human Services Performance Council (Council) was authorized by the 2013 Minnesota Legislature as part of the Performance Management system. The work of the council is to advise the DHS commissioner on the implementation and operation of the system, including county performance management and departmental procedures, and to provide annual reviews and reports to the Minnesota Legislature.

Council members representing DHS, service providers/advocates, and tribal governments/communities of color were appointed by the commissioner. The Association of Minnesota Counties and the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators appointed their own respective representatives.

## What Are the Outcomes and Measures in the Performance Management System?

The Performance Management system outcomes and measures include:

**Outcome 1:** Adults and children are safe and secure

- **Measure:** Percent of children with a maltreatment determination who do not experience a repeat maltreatment determination within six months

**Outcome 2:** Children have stability in their living situation

- **Measure:** Percent of current child support paid
- **Measure:** Percent of children discharged from out-of-home placement to reunification who were reunified in less than 12 months

**Outcome 3:** Children have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential

- **Measure:** Percent of children in family foster care that were placed in a relative home
- **Measure:** Percent of child support cases with paternity established

**Outcome 4:** People are economically secure

- **Measure:** Percent of expedited Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications processed within one business day
- **Measure:** Percent of SNAP and cash assistance applications processed timely
- **Measure:** Percent of open child support cases with an order established
- **Measure:** MFIP/DWP Self-Support Index

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<sup>1</sup> To clarify understanding, the Council recommends using the term “threshold” in place of “standard.”

**Outcome 5:** Vulnerable adults experience a quality of life

**Outcome 6:** People have access to health care and receive effective services

The system does not currently have measures for outcomes five and six. However, there are measures currently under development:

- Measures for adult protective services are currently being developed. The data for these measures are being finalized, and will be recommended to the Council for approval late 2014.
- Performance Management staff and the Council are working with DHS, counties, and community stakeholders to develop measures for adult mental health. Work on adult mental health measures began in October 2014.
- Performance Management staff is in the beginning stages of developing health care measures.

## **What are Thresholds?**

Thresholds are a way to evaluate performance. Thresholds indicate a minimally acceptable level of performance, which is based on data collected by counties and DHS. The Council set up workgroups in the fall of 2014 to create thresholds specific to each measure. The workgroups were made up of experts from the Council, counties, non-profit and provider communities, and DHS.

Once the Council recommends and the commissioner approves the thresholds, the Performance Management team will publish the information. Counties will be held accountable for meeting these thresholds beginning in 2015.

## **How Will the System Measure Racial and Ethnic Disparities?**

Racial and ethnic disparities are addressed in the legislation as follows: When a county or service delivery authority does not meet a threshold for a racial or ethnic minority for three or more measures, even if the threshold for the population as a whole was met, the county must develop a Performance Improvement Plan.

Measuring outcomes for racial and ethnic disparities is challenging because:

- The data may be limited or not available.
- Numbers of participants in a human service area may be too small to be statistically meaningful.

A workgroup is being developed to decide how to most accurately measure racial and ethnic disparities. This work is currently in progress and workgroup outcomes will be shared in early 2015.

## **How Will the System Measure Counties with Small Numbers?**

For some measures, the number of participants in a county or human service area may be too small to be statistically meaningful. A workgroup is being developed to decide how to most accurately

measure outcomes or performance in situations where numbers are small. This work is currently in progress and workgroup outcomes will be shared in early 2015.

## How Will Counties Be Held Accountable For Performance?

Counties will be held accountable through the “remedies process” described in legislation.

Performance Management staff will issue an annual report outlining how counties are doing. Annual reports will include county data around thresholds and measures, and will let counties know if they need to begin the remedies process.

The remedies process could include any or all of the following:

- **Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)**
  - Counties who do not meet the threshold for a particular measure must develop a PIP. DHS approves the PIP.
  - Counties and DHS negotiate target improvement goals, which are included in the PIP.
  - PIPs last for two years with an option to extend, when appropriate.
- **Fiscal Penalties**
  - If the county repeatedly fails to meet the threshold and improvement targets outlined in the PIP, fiscal penalties may be applied.
  - Fiscal penalties will not exceed one percent of the county’s human services expenditures.
  - Counties must reinvest the amount of the fiscal penalty into the essential human services program that was underperforming.
  - A county will not be required to pay more than three fiscal penalties in a year.
- **Reassignment of the program to another county, service delivery authority, or transfer to the state (DHS)**
  - A county or service delivery authority not achieving minimum performance for a specific human services program or for more than one-half of the defined essential human services programs may be subject to further remedies that could include:
    - Voluntary incorporation of the specific human services program with an existing county of service delivery authority.
    - Mandatory incorporation of the specific human services program with an existing county of service delivery authority.
    - Transfer of authority for the specific human services program to the commissioner.

## How Will the System Support Counties?

The Performance Management system supports county performance improvement by providing technical assistance.

Technical assistance may include the following:

**Consultation:** Providing consultation to DHS program areas, counties, and community partners on improving performance, identifying barriers, and problem solving through organizational analysis methodologies.

**Best Practices:** Researching, identifying, and sharing best practices with counties, service delivery authorities, and DHS. Best practices are often defined as a set of guidelines, ethics or ideas that represent the most effective or efficient course of action.

**Training:** Providing non-programmatic training or referrals to both programmatic and non-programmatic training available through DHS, the State of Minnesota, counties, community organizations and other places as needed.

**Bridging and Connecting:** Providing referrals and/or assistance to develop and improve connections between and among counties, DHS business areas, and communities.

## What Comes Next?

The Council and the Performance Management team will:

- Develop measures for adult protective services and for adult mental health, and share this information with counties in 2015 individual county reports.
- Issue a bulletin, which describes the remedies process and performance improvement plans in detail.
- Share individual county reports. While last year's report focused primarily on providing baseline data, this report will focus on performance in comparison to thresholds.

The Performance Management system is in the implementation phase and will continue to develop through further development of measures and thresholds as well as through collaboration with other DHS program areas, counties, and community stakeholders.

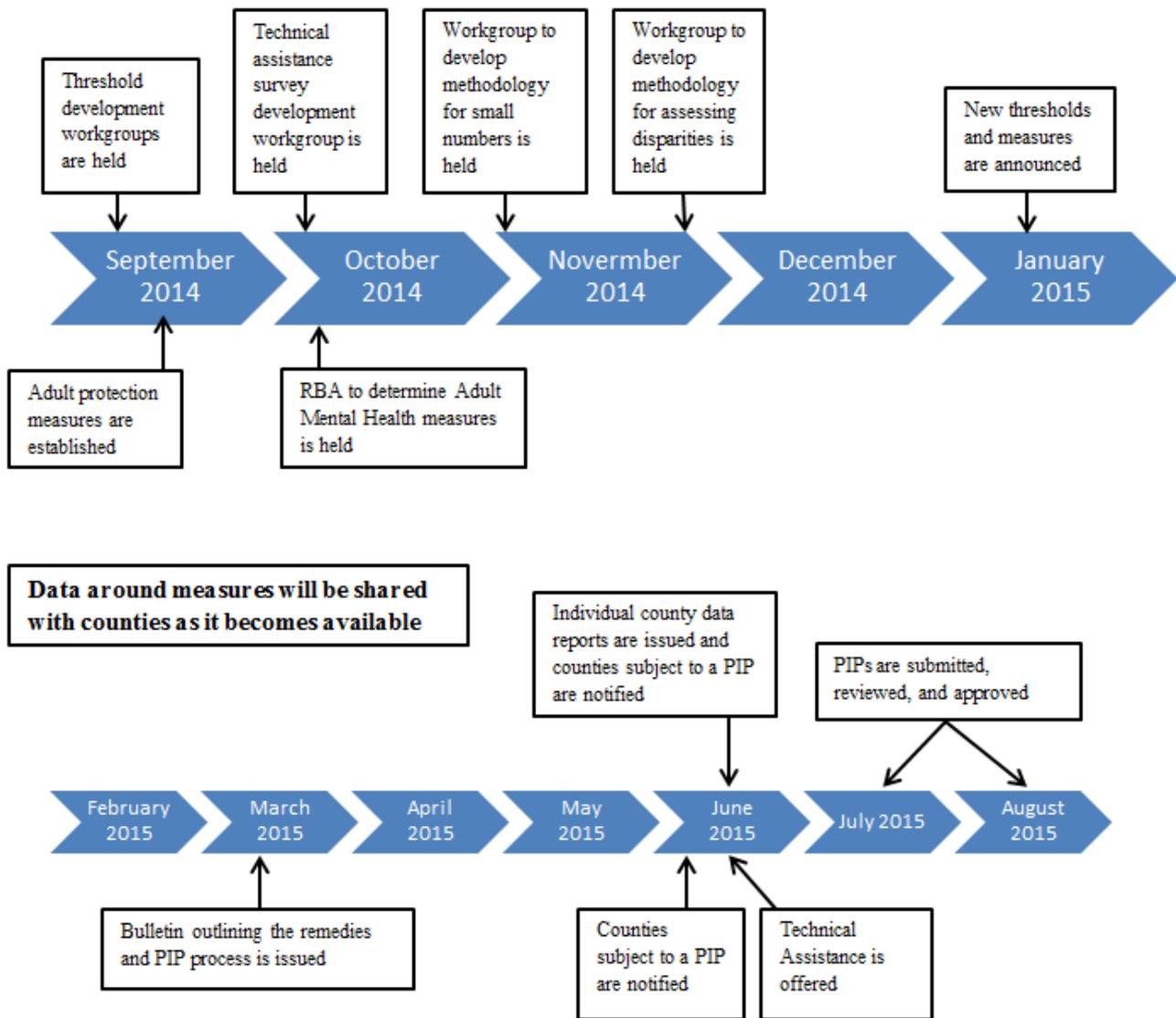
This is an ongoing process. New measures will be developed, and current measures may change. Any changes will be made with collaboration and input from counties, DHS program areas, and community stakeholders.

## When Will Counties Be Held Accountable to Performance Thresholds?

Individual county reports will be shared in June of 2015. At this time, counties will be notified if they need to develop a PIP for any of the current measures.

The Performance Management team will help develop PIPs and work with counties to use current quality assurance plans they may already have on the existing measures to satisfy this requirement.

## Measures, Technical Assistance (TA) and Remedies Timelines



## How Can I Find Out More?

Counties can find more information about the Performance Management system on [CountyLink](#), including the latest updates on the system, information on outcomes and measures, answers to frequently asked questions, and improvement resources and tools.

Attachments:

- [Minnesota Statutes, Chapter. 402A](#)
- [Fact Sheet](#)
- [Council Membership](#)

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory**

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 431-5780 (voice) or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.