

MINNESOTA FAMILY SUPPORT & RECOVERY COUNCIL

2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE




Carver County Child Support Workforce Services An Overview

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CHILD SUPPORT WORKFORCE SERVICES



The Carver County Child Support Workforce Services Program was started in 2004 as a joint project between the Child Support and Workforce Service Units of Health and Human Services and the County Attorney's Office.

It has been well received by attorneys, agencies, court administration and Judges and has been considered a success!

CHILD SUPPORT WORKFORCE SERVICES



- The main goal of the program has been to assist unemployed/underemployed obligors unable to make their monthly child support payments after securing long-term, stable employment at a wage level that will allow them to support themselves and their children.
- A primary outcome of the program is a demonstrated increase in child support payments and/or more consistent payments.

CHILD SUPPORT WORKFORCE SERVICES



Obligors targeted for this program are court ordered to work with an Employment Counselor out of child support legal action (paternity, modification, establishment and civil contempt) from Workforce Services, which is co-located in the same building as our Child Support staff. Administratively, the Child Support and Workforce Services Units both reside within the Income Support Department of Carver County Health and Human Services.

CHILD SUPPORT WORKFORCE SERVICES



Following a comprehensive assessment of their skills, education level, prior work history, barriers to employment and support services needed, an Employment Development Plan (EDP) will be jointly developed by the Employment Counselor and obligor.

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



- The EDP outlines the services that will be provided to the obligor along with their duties and responsibilities. Services available include job readiness, job seeking resources, vocational counseling and support service assistance.
- Obligors are required to engage in appropriate job searching activities at a minimum of 25 hours per week, unless the Employment Counselor determines otherwise, based upon their assessments. The Employment Counselor provides a copy of the plan to the Child Support Officer (CSO) who made the referral and updates them on a regular basis regarding compliance with the plan.

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Participants are typically scheduled for the following workshops as determined by the assessment and EDP:

- **Interviewing:** *Learn how to prepare for an interview.* Mock interviews will enable participants to critique their performance, identify and build on strengths and acknowledge areas where improvements may be needed.
- **Beginner and Advanced Resumes:** *Write your way to Success.* Jobseekers will learn the basics of resume writing: Do's & Don'ts, power words and ways to accentuate skills. A unique and polished resume will be created and/or updated. Within a few days, computer printed originals of the resume will be made available to each jobseeker.

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Participants are typically scheduled for the following workshops as determined by the assessment and EDP (cont'd):

- **Job Seeker Over 50:** Job Seekers will review many effective strategies to present their age, experience and future opportunities in a positive light.
- **LinkedIn For Beginners:** Only 25% or less jobs are actually advertised online. Understanding how to find those hidden jobs can be beneficial.
- **Career Exploration:** Learn about your skills, interests and personality by taking a variety of assessments and tools to assist in matching the best career opportunities. Once completed, it will help enhance your chances at being in the right positions for long term success.

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Participants are typically scheduled for the following workshops as determined by the assessment and EDP (cont'd):

- **Networking / Branding:** Jobseekers learn how to market themselves and find employment thru networking. Branding helps a jobseeker figure out who they are and what attributes they can bring to an employer.
- **Salary Negotiations:** This workshop discusses the tools needed to discuss compensation, asking the right questions to possibly increase their salary and other tips for increased income.

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



- Obligors are also required to fill out daily applications for employment, contact employers for interviews and interview for open positions. A typical number is 10+ apps/week.
- Jobseekers are taught that they should treat their job search as they would a regular job, having specific times set each day for performing the various tasks in their EDP that will ultimately lead to gainful employment.
- Documentation of daily employer contacts, interviews, resumes sent, etc. is required on the Activity Log / Employer Contact Sheet. This is then submitted each week (with documentation) to the Employment Counselor to verify.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- The Workforce Services Resource Room has 10 computers. A full-time Resource Specialist is on duty to assist job seekers with using the computers. The computers are equipped with many extras including the following:
 - Internet access
 - MN Workforce Center Organizer with tabs to:
 - Newspaper sites
 - Career and Personality Assessments
 - Computer software tutorials
 - Direct links to web pages for job leads (Minnesotawork.net, etc.)
 - Local company web pages
 - Community Resources
 - Maps
 - Microsoft Office to complete their resume, type cover letters, practice keyboarding skills, etc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- A person is on staff to type resumes, make changes, assist with cover letters, answer general job seeking questions, etc.
- A library of books/videos that can be used on-site or checked out for home use. The topics include personal development, writing resumes, cover letters, thank you's, researching careers, starting a new career, starting a business, available training programs and many other work resource books.
- If a person is program eligible, there is transportation available to take clients to interviews, work or into Workforce Services for job searching purposes. Public transportation is sometimes difficult in this area.
- A Jobs Board with flyers shows open jobs in the Southwest Metro area. It advertises open positions that are immediately available to job seekers.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- Telephone stations to make private calls to employers.
- A copy machine and fax machine for job search use.
- A specified area including information on numerous community support programs.
- Multiple times a week, there are mini job fairs or employers manning tables to collect applications or interview potential employers onsite.

HOW DOES SOMEONE GET REFERRED TO THE PROGRAM?



REFERRAL PROCESS



At the conclusion of the hearing in which the obligor either agrees to cooperate with the Workforce Services or is court ordered to, the CSO will immediately provide Brad Braun, Workforce Services Employment Counselor, with a written description of what the court ordered. Once the actual court order is received by the CSO, they will forward a copy to the Employment Counselor via e-mail for reference when completing the Affidavit of Compliance or Non Compliance.

REFERRAL PROCESS



As part of the court's order, the obligor will be required to contact Brad Braun at Workforce Services and schedule an initial meeting within 1 week from the date of the hearing. The court order will also require the obligor to develop an employment plan. This plan will outline specific requirements and goals that can be documented, verified and testified to at a later date if need be. This employment plan would be signed and dated by the obligor after the program rules are thoroughly explained.

REFERRAL PROCESS



- The developed employment plan should include a specific number of hours the obligor will engage in workforce activities each week. The number of job search hours required in the EDP should be no less than 25 unless the Employment Counselor determines otherwise based upon his/her evaluations.
- The day the EDP is developed and signed, the Employment Counselor will provide a signed copy of the plan to the CSO who will, in turn send a copy to the County Attorney's Office.

REFERRAL PROCESS



- The Employment Counselor is responsible for submitting an affidavit of the obligor's compliance with the court order to the CSO. This document is typically completed within 6-8 weeks after the signing of the EDP OR 2 weeks prior to the next court date. The CSO will send a copy to the County Attorney's Office. The County Attorney's Office will then file the EDP and the affidavit with court administration and serve the parties and/or attorneys.
- Workforce Services staff is responsible for completing the information, dates, compliance or non compliance, etc. on an Excel spreadsheet as they occur.



WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE COURT ORDER?

PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR ORDER



- The obligor shall contact Brad Braun at Carver County Workforce Services (952-361-1625) within one week to schedule an initial meeting to begin the development of an employment plan.
- The obligor shall cooperate in the development of an employment plan by which shall include a minimum number of hours each week of documented employment search activities utilizing the Workforce Services facilities and it's resources. The actual number of hours required each week shall be determined by the assigned Employment Counselor, but in all appropriate cases shall be no less than 25 hours per week.

PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR ORDER



- The employment plan shall include a requirement that the obligor submit weekly documentation to the employment counselor of completed employment/job search activities.
- The obligor shall fully cooperate and complete the Workforce Program.
- An Affidavit shall be completed by the Employment Counselor detailing the obligor's compliance level.
- A copy of the employment plan and Affidavit of Compliance shall be filed with the court and a copy served upon all parties prior to the next hearing date.

PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR ORDER



- This matter is hereby continued to (specify date – 12 weeks after the court hearing). OR (*If a contempt order*), the obligor is required to personally appear on (specify date – 12 weeks after the court hearing) or a bench warrant will be issued for his/her arrest. The purpose of this hearing is to determine the obligor's cooperation and compliance with the employment plan and their success in achieving employment.
 - The obligor shall notify his/her Employment Counselor and the CSO as soon as employment is obtained so that automatic income withholding can be implemented.
- ** Other language has been added if there is an agreement to pay support, etc. This can be modified depending on agreement.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE OBLIGOR DOES NOT COMPLY?



- The County Attorney recommends that the obligor be terminated from the program.
- If a contempt referral, an evidentiary hearing is set revoking the stayed sentence or a contested hearing is set for support.
- Brad Braun will then be required to testify at any contested/revocation contempt hearing and/or make recommendations for future conditions.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE OBLIGOR COMPLIES?



- The court orders the obligor to continue using Workforce Services and schedules another review hearing.
- If not employed, Brad Braun, along with his supervisor, determines that the obligor may qualify to start utilizing the second stage part of the Child Support Workforce Services program known as the Work Referral Program.

WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



In 2008, the Work Referral Program was intended to assist obligors with limited employment history (or who have barriers such as a criminal history, transportation issues or other significant restrictions) who were unable to secure employment through their own methods. It was meant to develop a solid, recent work history by participating in paid work experience activities at public and non-profit sites throughout the County.

WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



- This program is no longer operating. However, it may be reinstated if funds are available and there is a need.
- This program was started due to the recession. Carver County noticed that many obligors who were referred to the program were complying, but not finding employment after many months of job searching
- Carver County was able to fund this program for a short period of time. Once the job market picked up this program ended.

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WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



HOW IT WORKED:

Selected obligors would participate for up to 12 weeks of paid volunteer work experience activities, but only after a 6-8 weeks of supervised job searching efforts. The enrolled volunteers would then earn a minimum wage for their work efforts. Wages were paid directly by Carver County through their payroll services. Of these earned wages, a maximum of \$150/month would be eligible for wage garnishment.

WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS:

- County staff members from the County Attorney's Office, Workforce Services and Child Support Units mutually selected candidates for the paid volunteer opportunity. In certain instances, enrollment may also be ordered by the court. Once a candidate is selected, Brad Braun would assess their professional skill sets to help ensure proper placement. The Workforce Services Employment staff contact prospective worksites about job slot availability.

WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



WHAT ENTITIES OFFERED VOLUNTEER EMPLOYMENT?

- The Carver County Historical Society
- Carver County Environmental Facility
- CAP Agency
- Food Shelf
- Goodwill Easter Seals
- Carver County Library
- Auburn Manor (Non Profit Senior Home)
- Public Schools and Government Center
- Other Non Profit Agencies

WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



Proposed Order Language:

- > Find full-time verifiable employment;
- > Continue to fully utilize Carver County Workforce Services as outlined in previous orders;
- > Participate in the second stage of the Child Support Workforce Services program, whereby he/she will be placed in a temporary job at up to twenty five hours per week at a minimum wage;
- > Pay \$150.00/month in basic support for the months of (DATES);
- > Follow the job search requirements of his/her employment plan, but in no event shall he/she be doing more than 40 hours of total work when combined with his/her temporary job and job searching hours per week.

WORK REFERRAL PROGRAM



HOW CARVER COUNTY BENEFITED:

- Intended results from operation of the Work Referral Program included:
 - Valuable paid work experience for the program volunteers;
 - Financial relief for both the volunteer and the obligee to which the support is owed;
 - A potential increase in Child Support collections which could increase federal incentive performance funding;
 - An increase in staff services for local agencies that provide direct services and benefits to area citizens.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES 2004 TO PRESENT



- The program has been operating for 13 years.
- While several obligors have been referred more than once, over 200 unique obligors (approximately 16/year) have met with Brad Braun and participated in this Child Support Program.
- These participants have been given the opportunity to improve their work skills and become compliant with their obligations. For those that choose to accept the assistance, the average wage was \$11.81/hr with a 349% increase in obligation payments (at 6 month after beginning employment).

FUNDING THE WORKFORCE PROGRAM



Two Sources of \$\$ Fund this Program:

- Child Support Federal Incentive \$\$
- Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) Adult \$\$ through our local Workforce Service Area

FUNDING THE WORKFORCE PROGRAM



- Child Support Incentive \$\$ pays for a portion of the Employment Counselor's time.
- Consulted with DHS Child Support to ensure expenditures were allowable.

QUESTIONS? IDEAS?



9/25/2017

MFSRC Annual Conference

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THANK YOU!
THE END


