



Housing Best Practices: MSA Housing Assistance vs. Housing Support

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Housing Support

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Housing and Support Services

Housing Support

- 100% state-funded income support to pay for housing expenses, and sometimes additional services
 - Always
 - Room and Board, up to **\$954** per month (20,000 people)
 - Starting **7/1/2021**
 - Sometimes
 - Supplemental Services, **\$482.84**, *or higher if approved by legislature* (5,800 people)

Housing Support Standards

- Provision of room and board *(everyone on Housing Support)*
 - three nutritious meals a day
 - a bed, clothing storage, linen, bedding, laundry supplies
 - housekeeping, including cleaning and lavatory supplies or service
 - maintenance and operation of the building and grounds
- Provision of supplemental services *(in addition to room and board for about 25% of recipients)*
 - **connect people with resources for identified needs**
 - **case notes**
 - general oversight and supervision
 - arranging for medical and social services
 - assist with transportation
 - *other if required by legislature*

Individual Eligibility

- People with low income and assets
 - Income can't exceed the Housing Support benefit amount.
 - If a person will only receive the room and board rate, their countable income cannot exceed \$954.
 - If a person is eligible for supplemental services, their income cannot exceed \$1,436.84 per month.
 - A client's maximum obligation is \$954.
 - Liquid assets cannot exceed \$10,000
 - People should be aware that other programs such as Medical Assistance or SSI have lower asset limits

- **Basis of eligibility = verified reason**
 - Elderly – 65 and up
 - Certified Disability (SSI, RSDI, SMRT)
 - Disabling Condition
 - *Verified by qualified professional or county designee*

Individual Eligibility

- ~~Must have low income and assets~~
- ~~Elderly – 65 and up~~
- ~~Certified Disability (SSI, RSDI, SMRT)~~
- ~~Disabling Condition~~
- Must be exiting residential behavioral health treatment
 - Residential Crisis Stabilization, Intensive Residential Treatment Services (IRTS), or inpatient Substance Use Disorder treatment

Transition from Residential Behavioral Health Treatment

Do not need to verify income or assets for up to 3 months



Eligible Places

- **Two types of places:**
 - Group Settings
 - Meals must be provided.
 - Community-based Settings
 - People have their own lease and have the option to prepare their own meals.
- **Every place has to be:**
 - Licensed or registered, OR
 - Tribally authorized, OR
 - Exempt in state law

Housing Support and MSA

- Which Housing Support settings allow me to switch to MSA Housing Assistance without moving?
 - General Supportive Housing or LTH Supportive Housing
 - Metro Demo
 - Tribally authorized independent housing?
- Any other Housing Support setting will introduce MSA eligibility, but the recipient will likely have to move to make the switch.

Housing Support Setting Characteristics

| Housing Support Setting Type (MAXIS VND2 CODE - DHS or Health Dept License) | Group Setting | Community Setting | DHS License Required | MDH License Required | MDH Registration Required | Lease Required | Meals Provided | SNAP eligible | Habitability Inspection Required | Supplemental Service Rate (SSR) available? * | SSR using "Banked Beds"? |
|--|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Adult Foster Care (04*) | X | | x | | | | X | | | No | N/A |
| Boarding Care Home (02**) | X | | | x | | | X | | | Maybe | No |
| Board and Lodge (04**) | X | | | x | | | X | | | No | N/A |
| Board and Lodge with Special Services (06**) | X | | | x | X | | X | | | Maybe | If available |
| Hotel/Restaurant (05**) | X | | | x | | | X | | | Maybe | If available |
| Supervised Living Facility (03**) | X | | | x | | | X | | | Maybe | If available |
| Assisted Living (09**) | X | | | x | | | X | | | Maybe | If available |
| Supportive Housing - GENERAL (10**) | | X | | | | X | | X | X | Maybe | If available |
| Supportive Housing - LTH (10**) | | X | | | | X | | X | X | Yes | No |
| Metro Demonstration Project (08**) | | X | | | | X | | X | X | Yes | No |
| Tribe Certified Housing - group (07**) | X | | | | | | X | | | Maybe | If available |
| Tribe Certified Housing - independent living (07**) | | X | | | | X | | X | | Maybe | If available |

* = DHS License Type on VND2 panel; ** = MDH License Type on VND2 panel

* SSR is available if authorized in MN Statutes Chapter 2561.04 or 2561.05. Contact the Housing Support team at dhs.dhs_grh@state.mn.us with questions about authorization for use of Supplemental Service Rates.

Going from Housing Support to MSA Housing Assistance

updated February 24, 2022

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Things to Think About

If you get help from the [Housing Support](#) program (formerly called Group Residential Housing or GRH), you might have more money and more housing options if you switched to [Minnesota Supplemental Aid \(MSA\) Housing Assistance](#).

This article explains why you might want to make this change, how to do it, and who can help you if you get [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#) or [Social Security Disability Insurance \(SSDI\)](#).

Notes:

- If you don't get Housing Support (formerly GRH), this article isn't for you. Instead, check out [HB101's MSA Housing Assistance article](#).
- If you don't get SSI or SSDI, this article isn't for you. [Contact a Social Security Advocate to get help applying for these benefits](#).

Reasons to Change from Housing Support to MSA Housing Assistance

Housing Support is a program for people with disabilities and older adults who have low income. It helps pay for housing and things people need to keep living in certain group settings or in the community. But when you get Housing Support, you don't have a lot of money for your own expenses and you have to live in a place approved by the Housing Support program.

If you get SSI or SSDI and you want to have more money and live more independently in a place you choose, Housing Support can help you get started on making a plan. Your plan might include:

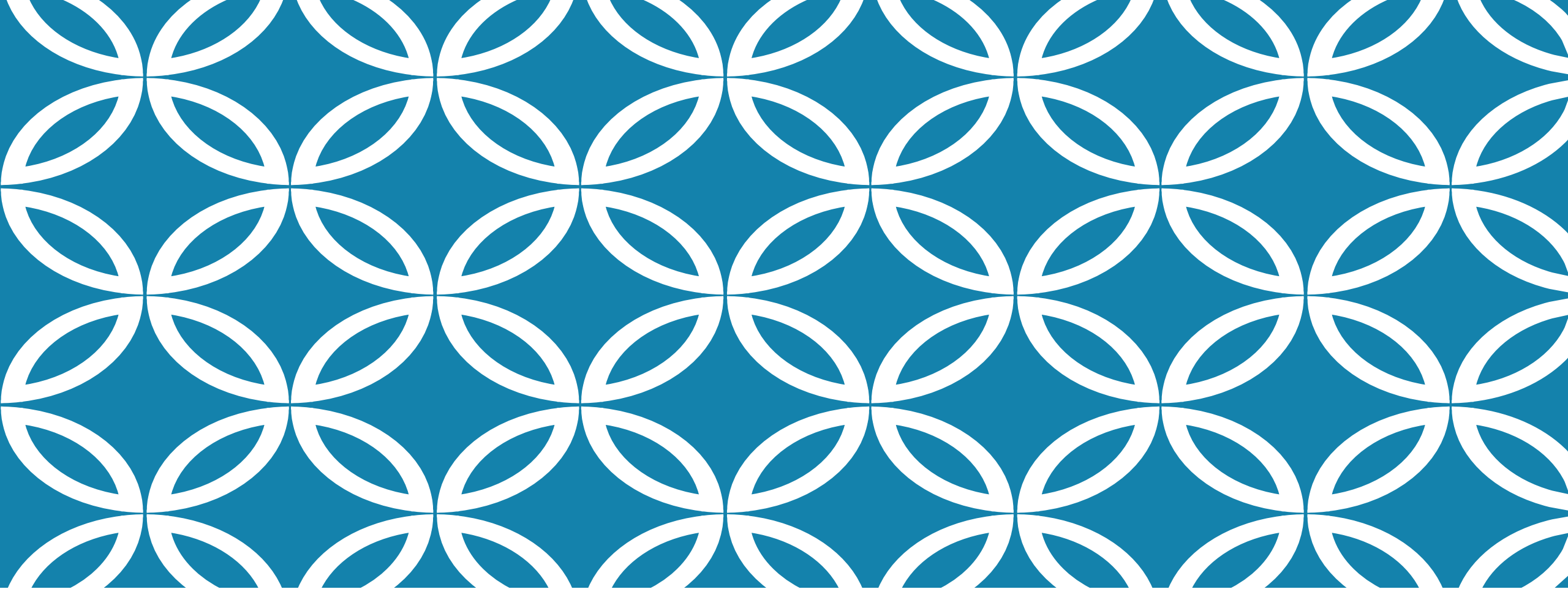
- **Applying for MSA Housing Assistance.** MSA Housing Assistance helps people with disabilities pay for their housing, but it also helps pay for rent in any home or apartment in the community, not just in a setting that is approved for Housing Support. It helps by giving anybody who qualifies for MSA, spends more than 40% of income on rent, and meets other eligibility requirements an extra \$397 per month to help with rent. Note: You cannot get Housing Support benefits and MSA Housing Assistance at the same time.
- **Looking for a job.** Working is the fastest way to increase your income, meaning you'll have more money if you work. Both Housing Support and MSA Housing Assistance have rules that mean that when you work, you end up better off.

Things to Think About

[How to Make the Switch](#)

[Next Steps](#)

- [“Going from Housing Support to MSA Housing Assistance”](#)



MINNESOTA SUPPLEMENTAL AID HOUSING ASSISTANCE

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Minnesota DHS

MINNESOTA SUPPLEMENTAL AID (MSA)

- State-funded monthly cash supplement for some SSI recipients and low-income RSDI recipients
- Must be over age 18 (unless blind), and:
 - (1) Receiving any amount of SSI, or
 - (2) Would receive SSI but for excess income (and over 65, blind, or disabled)

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

SSI is a federal cash assistance program for people who:

- Are elderly (over 65), blind, or disabled, and
- Have limited income and resources
- SSI is an entitlement program; RSDI (SSDI) is an insurance program

2022 SSI rates (Federal Benefit Rate or FBR):

- \$841 /month-individual
- \$1,261 /month-couple
- Some people get both SSI and RSDI benefits

APPLYING FOR MSA

People don't get always MSA automatically when approved for SSI. To apply for MSA:

- Online: [MNbenefits.mn.gov](https://mnbenefits.mn.gov)
- In person, mail or fax: Use the [Combined Application Form](#) (DHS-5223). Check the “cash” box on page 1 and sign/date.

[MNBENEFITS.MN.GOV](https://mnbenefits.mn.gov)

MNbenefits is a new way to apply for public assistance in Minnesota.

It's much simpler to use, available in Spanish, and allows document uploading.

What do you need help with today?

Check all that apply.

🍎 **Food (SNAP)**

Money to buy food for you and your family

💰 **Cash programs**

Programs like GA and MFIP that help families and single adults meet basic needs

👶 **Child Care Assistance**

Helps pay for childcare while you pursue work or school

🏠 **Emergency Assistance**

Helps with rent and utility payments to stop eviction

🏘️ **Housing Support (GRH)**

Also called Group Residential Housing. Helps seniors and adults with disabilities pay for housing

Combined Application Form

Apply online at: www.applymn.dhs.mn.gov

Do not use this application to apply for health care coverage. The soonest your SNAP (food) or cash benefits can start is the date the agency receives your application. We can set your application date if we have your name, address and signature on page 1. **For your application to be complete, answer all questions on the application. Tell someone if you need help filling out this application. Be sure to sign and date the application on pages 1 and 10.**

| |
|-------------|
| CASE NUMBER |
|-------------|

| PERSON 1 | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| APPLICANT'S LEGAL NAME - LAST | | FIRST NAME | MIDDLE NAME | OTHER NAMES YOU USE (family name, nickname, etc.) | |
| SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER | DATE OF BIRTH | GENDER <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female | MARITAL STATUS* <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> M <input type="radio"/> S <input type="radio"/> L <input type="radio"/> D <input type="radio"/> W | | ARE YOU A VETERAN? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| ADDRESS WHERE YOU LIVE (if you do not have an address, write "homeless") | | | APT. NUMBER | CITY | STATE ZIP CODE |
| MAILING ADDRESS (if different from address where you live) | | | APT. NUMBER | CITY | STATE ZIP CODE |
| PRIMARY PHONE NUMBER | OTHER PHONE NUMBER | DO YOU LIVE ON A RESERVATION? <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes - which one? | | | |
| DO YOU NEED AN INTERPRETER? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No | WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED SPOKEN LANGUAGE? | | WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED WRITTEN LANGUAGE? | | |
| LAST SCHOOL GRADE COMPLETED | MOST RECENTLY MOVED TO MINNESOTA (mm/dd/yyyy) Date: _____ From: _____ | | | | |
| CITIZENSHIP <input type="radio"/> U.S. Citizen or U.S. National <input type="radio"/> Naturalized U.S. Citizen or Derived U.S. Citizen <input type="radio"/> Not a U.S. Citizen | | | | IMMIGRATION STATUS | |
| If you are applying for the Minnesota Housing Support program: | | | | | |
| WHICH HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM ARE YOU APPLYING FOR? | | | HOUSING SUPPORT VENDOR NAME AND NUMBER (if you know it) | | |
| WHAT PROGRAM(S) ARE YOU APPLYING FOR? <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP (food) <input type="checkbox"/> Cash programs <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> None | | | | | |
| ETHNICITY (optional) Hispanic? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No | | RACE** (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> W | | Is anyone in your household pregnant? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No If yes, Who? _____ | |
| Has anyone in your household ever received cash assistance, commodities or SNAP benefits before? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No If yes, When? _____ Where? _____ What? _____ | | | | | |



Do you need help right away? Questions 1-4 below will help us decide if you can get help with food right away.

- How much income did or will your household get **this month**? \$ _____
1a. Are you self-employed? Yes No
- How much does your household (including children) have in **cash, checking or savings**? \$ _____
- How much does your household pay for **rent/mortgage per month**? \$ _____
What **utilities** do you pay? Heat Air conditioning Electricity Phone None
Do you receive energy assistance? Yes No
- Is anyone in your household a **migrant or seasonal farm worker**? Yes No

I have looked over my answers and believe they are all true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------------------|---------------|
| SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE | DATE | AGENCY/TRIBAL SIGNATURE | DATE RECEIVED |
|  | | | |

MSA BENEFITS

\$841 SSI + \$81 MSA = \$922 total

Some people may be eligible for additional MSA “special needs” benefits, including:

- Representative payee fees (\$25/month)
- Guardian/Conservator fees (up to \$100/month)
- Special diets prescribed by doctor (amounts vary)
- MSA Housing Assistance

COMBINED APPLICATION

24. For Minnesota Supplemental Assistance only: Does anyone in the household have any of the following expenses?

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Representative payee fees | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Guardian or conservator fees | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Medically-prescribed special diet | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| High housing costs | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

MSA HOUSING ASSISTANCE

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| \$841 | SSI |
| + \$81 | MSA |
| + \$397 | MSA Housing Assistance* |
| <hr/> | |
| \$ 1,319 | Total Income |

** Increased MSA benefits can affect SNAP benefits.
The impact depends on several factors.*

MSA HOUSING ASSISTANCE

- Must be eligible for MSA **and**
- Be under age 65 when applying **and**
- Have monthly housing costs (rent & utilities) more than 40% of gross monthly income (not including MSA benefits) **and**
- Meet at least one of the conditions on the next slide:

MSA HOUSING ASSISTANCE

- Relocating from an institution (hospital, nursing facility, RTC, ICF-DD or IRTS program); or
- Eligible for Personal Care Assistance (PCA) services; or
- Receiving waived services and living in their own home or rented apartment; or
- Transitioning from Housing Support

FOR WAIVER RECIPIENTS ONLY

- To receive MSA Housing Assistance, a person receiving waived services must live “in their own home or rented or leased apartment.”
- MSA HA does not follow the “own home” definition that applies to waiver programs
- A waiver recipient can receive MSA HA while living in a provider-controlled setting, including customized living and integrated community supports, as long as it is their own home or apartment. Anything less is not sufficient.

Transitioning from Housing Support to MSA Housing Assistance:

- Plan ahead so there is no gap in funding. County needs AT LEAST one full month to turn HS off and MSA HA on.
- Talk with the client's financial worker. Provide all verifications showing the client is eligible, up front.
- Are they moving from a Housing Support facility (like a board and lodge) or are they "transitioning in place" (like in an LTH supportive housing program)? Will a housing search be necessary?
- How much independent living experience does the client have? Will you continue to provide services? Is this client on a waiver or eligible for Housing Stabilization Services? Coordinate this carefully.
- Can this client manage their finances appropriately, or will they need help? Stress the importance of budgeting.
- Communicate with the landlord so there are no surprises about changes in the way rent is paid, or by whom.

Thank You!

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