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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 4368

03/17/2022

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Human Services Finance and Policy

- 1.1 A bill for an act
- 1.2 relating to human services; modifying the family assets for independence program;
- 1.3 appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2020, sections 256E.35,
- 1.4 subdivisions 1, 2, 4a, 6, 7; 256P.02, by adding a subdivision.
- 1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:
- 1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 256E.35, subdivision 1, is amended to read:
- 1.7 Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The Minnesota family assets for independence initiative
- 1.8 is established to provide incentives for low-income families to accrue assets for education,
- 1.9 housing, vehicles, emergencies, and economic development purposes.
- 1.10 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 256E.35, subdivision 2, is amended to read:
- 1.11 Subd. 2. **Definitions.** (a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to this section.
- 1.12 (b) "Eligible educational institution" means the following:
- 1.13 (1) an institution of higher education described in section 101 or 102 of the Higher
- 1.14 Education Act of 1965; or
- 1.15 (2) an area vocational education school, as defined in subparagraph (C) or (D) of United
- 1.16 States Code, title 20, chapter 44, section 2302 (3) (the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and
- 1.17 Applied Technology Education Act), which is located within any state, as defined in United
- 1.18 States Code, title 20, chapter 44, section 2302 (30). This clause is applicable only to the
- 1.19 extent section 2302 is in effect on August 1, 2008.
- 1.20 (c) "Family asset account" means a savings account opened by a household participating
- 1.21 in the Minnesota family assets for independence initiative.

2.1 (d) "Fiduciary organization" means:

2.2 (1) a community action agency that has obtained recognition under section 256E.31;

2.3 (2) a federal community development credit union ~~serving the seven-county metropolitan~~
2.4 ~~area; or~~

2.5 (3) a women-oriented economic development agency ~~serving the seven-county~~
2.6 ~~metropolitan area;~~

2.7 (4) a federally recognized Tribal nation; or

2.8 (5) a nonprofit organization, as defined under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue
2.9 Code.

2.10 (e) "Financial coach" means a person who:

2.11 (1) has completed an intensive financial literacy training workshop that includes
2.12 curriculum on budgeting to increase savings, debt reduction and asset building, building a
2.13 good credit rating, and consumer protection;

2.14 (2) participates in ongoing statewide family assets for independence in Minnesota (FAIM)
2.15 network training meetings under FAIM program supervision; and

2.16 (3) provides financial coaching to program participants under subdivision 4a.

2.17 (f) "Financial institution" means a bank, bank and trust, savings bank, savings association,
2.18 or credit union, the deposits of which are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance
2.19 Corporation or the National Credit Union Administration.

2.20 (g) "Household" means all individuals who share use of a dwelling unit as primary
2.21 quarters for living and eating separate from other individuals.

2.22 (h) "Permissible use" means:

2.23 (1) postsecondary educational expenses at an eligible educational institution as defined
2.24 in paragraph (b), including books, supplies, and equipment required for courses of instruction;

2.25 (2) acquisition costs of acquiring, constructing, or reconstructing a residence, including
2.26 any usual or reasonable settlement, financing, or other closing costs;

2.27 (3) business capitalization expenses for expenditures on capital, plant, equipment, working
2.28 capital, and inventory expenses of a legitimate business pursuant to a business plan approved
2.29 by the fiduciary organization;

2.30 (4) acquisition costs of a principal residence within the meaning of section 1034 of the
2.31 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which do not exceed 100 percent of the average area purchase

3.1 price applicable to the residence determined according to section 143(e)(2) and (3) of the
3.2 Internal Revenue Code of 1986; ~~and~~

3.3 (5) acquisition costs of a personal vehicle only if approved by the fiduciary organization;

3.4 (6) contribution to an emergency savings account; and

3.5 (7) contribution to a Minnesota 529 savings plan.

3.6 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 256E.35, subdivision 4a, is amended to read:

3.7 Subd. 4a. **Financial coaching.** A financial coach shall provide the following to program
3.8 participants:

3.9 (1) financial education relating to budgeting, debt reduction, asset-specific training,
3.10 credit building, and financial stability activities;

3.11 (2) asset-specific training related to buying a home or vehicle, acquiring postsecondary
3.12 education, ~~or~~ starting or expanding a small business, saving for emergencies, or saving for
3.13 a child's education; and

3.14 (3) financial stability education and training to improve and sustain financial security.

3.15 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 256E.35, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

3.16 Subd. 6. **Withdrawal; matching; permissible uses.** (a) To receive a match, a
3.17 participating household must transfer funds withdrawn from a family asset account to its
3.18 matching fund custodial account held by the fiscal agent, according to the family asset
3.19 agreement. The fiscal agent must determine if the match request is for a permissible use
3.20 consistent with the household's family asset agreement.

3.21 (b) The fiscal agent must ensure the household's custodial account contains the applicable
3.22 matching funds to match the balance in the household's account, including interest, on at
3.23 least a quarterly basis and at the time of an approved withdrawal. Matches must be a
3.24 contribution of \$3 from state grant or TANF funds for every \$1 of funds withdrawn from
3.25 the family asset account not to exceed a ~~\$6,000~~ \$9,000 lifetime limit.

3.26 (c) Notwithstanding paragraph (b), if funds are appropriated for the Federal Assets for
3.27 Independence Act of 1998, and a participating fiduciary organization is awarded a grant
3.28 under that act, participating households with that fiduciary organization must be provided
3.29 matches as follows:

(1) from state grant and TANF funds, a matching contribution of \$1.50 for every \$1 of funds withdrawn from the family asset account not to exceed a ~~\$3,000~~ \$4,500 lifetime limit; and

(2) from nonstate funds, a matching contribution of not less than \$1.50 for every \$1 of funds withdrawn from the family asset account not to exceed a ~~\$3,000~~ \$4,500 lifetime limit.

(d) Upon receipt of transferred custodial account funds, the fiscal agent must make a direct payment to the vendor of the goods or services for the permissible use.

Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 256E.35, subdivision 7, is amended to read:

Subd. 7. **Program reporting.** The fiscal agent on behalf of each fiduciary organization participating in a family assets for independence initiative must report quarterly to the commissioner of human services identifying the participants with accounts, the number of accounts, the amount of savings and matches for each participant's account, the uses of the account, ~~and~~ the number of businesses, homes, vehicles, and educational services paid for with money from the account, and the amount of contributions to Minnesota 529 savings plans and emergency savings accounts, as well as other information that may be required for the commissioner to administer the program and meet federal TANF reporting requirements.

Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 256P.02, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 4. **Account exception.** Family asset accounts under section 256E.35 and individual development accounts authorized under the Assets for Independence Act, Title IV of the Community Opportunities, Accountability, and Training and Educational Services Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998, Public Law 105-285, shall be excluded when determining the equity value of personal property.

Sec. 7. **APPROPRIATION; FAMILY ASSETS FOR INDEPENDENCE.**

\$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for the purposes of the family assets for independence program in Minnesota Statutes, section 256E.35. This appropriation is added to the base.