

CHAPTER 256P
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
ELIGIBILITY AND VERIFICATION

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256P.001 APPLICABILITY.

General assistance and Minnesota supplemental aid under chapter 256D, child care assistance programs under chapter 119B, and programs governed by chapter 256I or 256J are subject to the requirements of this chapter, unless otherwise specified or exempted.

History: 2014 c 312 art 28 s 31; 2015 c 71 art 5 s 22,35

NOTE: The amendment to this section by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 22, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.01 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Scope.** For purposes of this chapter, the terms defined in this section have the meanings given them.

Subd. 2. **Agency.** "Agency" means any county, federally recognized Indian tribe, or multicounty social services collaboratives.

Subd. 2a. **Assistance unit.** "Assistance unit" is defined by program area under sections 119B.011, subdivision 13; 256D.02, subdivision 1a; 256D.35, subdivision 3a; 256I.03, subdivision 1b; and 256J.08, subdivision 7.

[See Note.]

Subd. 3. **Earned income.** "Earned income" means cash or in-kind income earned through the receipt of wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, tips, gratuities, profit from employment activities, net profit from self-employment activities, payments made by an employer for regularly accrued vacation or sick leave, severance pay based on accrued leave time, payments from training programs at a rate at or greater than the state's minimum wage, royalties, honoraria, or other profit from activity that results from the client's work, service, effort, or labor. The income must be in return for, or as a result of, legal activity.

[See Note.]

Subd. 4. **Earned income disregard.** "Earned income disregard" means earned income that is not counted according to section 256P.03 when determining eligibility and calculating the amount of the assistance payment.

Subd. 5. **Equity value.** "Equity value" means the amount of equity in personal property owned by a person and is determined by subtracting any outstanding encumbrances from the fair market value of the personal property.

Subd. 6. **Personal property.** "Personal property" means an item of value that is not real property.

Subd. 7. **Self-employment.** "Self-employment" means employment by an individual who:

(1) incurs costs in producing income and deducts these costs in order to equate the individual's income with income from sources where there are no production costs; and

(2) controls the individual's work by working either independently of an employer or freelance, or by running the business; or

(3) pays self-employment taxes.

Subd. 8. **Unearned income.** "Unearned income" has the meaning given in section 256P.06, subdivision 3, clause (2).

[See Note.]

History: 2014 c 312 art 28 s 32; 2015 c 71 art 5 s 23-25,35

NOTE: Subdivisions 2a and 8, as added by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, sections 23 and 25, are effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 3 by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 24, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.02 PERSONAL PROPERTY LIMITATIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Property ownership.** (a) The agency must apply paragraphs (b) to (e) to determine the value of personal property. The agency must use the equity value of legally available personal property to determine whether an applicant or participant is eligible for assistance.

(b) When personal property is jointly owned by two or more persons, the agency shall assume that each person owns an equal share, except that either person owns the entire sum of a joint personal checking or savings account. When an applicant or participant documents greater or lesser ownership, the agency must use that greater or lesser share to determine the equity value held by the applicant or participant. Other types of ownership must be evaluated according to law.

(c) Personal property owned by the applicant or participant must be presumed legally available to the applicant or participant unless the applicant or participant documents that the property is not legally available to the applicant or participant. When personal property is not legally available, its equity value must not be applied against the limits of subdivision 2.

(d) An applicant must disclose whether the applicant has transferred personal property valued in excess of the property limits in subdivision 2 for which reasonable compensation was not received within one year prior to application. A participant must disclose all transfers of property valued in excess of these limits, according to the reporting requirements in section 256J.30, subdivision 9. When a transfer of personal property without reasonable compensation has occurred:

(1) the person who transferred the property must provide the property's description, information needed to determine the property's equity value, the names of the persons who received the property, and the circumstances of and reasons for the transfer; and

(2) when the transferred property can be reasonably reacquired, or when reasonable compensation can be secured, the property is presumed legally available to the applicant or participant.

(e) A participant may build the equity value of personal property to the limits in subdivision 2.

Subd. 1a. **Exemption.** Participants who qualify for child care assistance programs under chapter 119B are exempt from this section.

[See Note.]

Subd. 2. **Personal property limitations.** The equity value of an assistance unit's personal property listed in clauses (1) to (4) must not exceed \$10,000 for applicants and participants. For purposes of this subdivision, personal property is limited to:

(1) cash;

(2) bank accounts;

(3) liquid stocks and bonds that can be readily accessed without a financial penalty; and

(4) vehicles not excluded under subdivision 3.

Subd. 3. **Vehicle exception.** One vehicle per assistance unit member age 16 or older shall be excluded when determining the equity value of personal property. If the assistance unit owns more than one vehicle per assistance unit member age 16 or older, the agency shall determine the trade-in values of all additional vehicles and apply the values to the personal property limitations in subdivision 2. To establish the trade-in values of vehicles, an agency must use the National Automobile Dealers Association online car values and car prices guide. When a vehicle is not listed in the online guide, or when the applicant or participant disputes the trade-in value listed in the online guide as unreasonable given the condition of the particular vehicle, the agency may require the applicant or participant to document the trade-in value by securing a written statement from a motor vehicle dealer licensed under section 168.27, stating the amount that the dealer would pay to purchase the vehicle. The agency shall reimburse the applicant or participant for the cost of a written statement that documents a lower loan value.

History: 2014 c 312 art 28 s 33; 2015 c 71 art 5 s 26,35

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 2014, chapter 312, article 28, section 33, is effective June 1, 2016. Laws 2014, chapter 312, article 28, section 33, the effective date.

NOTE: Subdivision 1a, as added by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 26, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.03 EARNED INCOME DISREGARD.

Subdivision 1. **Exempted programs.** Participants who qualify for child care assistance programs under chapter 119B, Minnesota supplemental aid under chapter 256D, and group residential housing under chapter 256I on the basis of eligibility for Supplemental Security Income are exempt from this section.

[See Note.]

Subd. 2. **Earned income disregard.** The agency shall disregard the first \$65 of earned income plus one-half of the remaining earned income per month.

History: 2014 c 312 art 28 s 34; 2015 c 71 art 5 s 27,35

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 1 by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 27, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.04 DOCUMENTING, VERIFYING, AND RECERTIFYING ELIGIBILITY.

Subdivision 1. **Exemption.** Participants who receive Minnesota supplemental aid and who maintain Supplemental Security Income eligibility under chapters 256D and 256I are exempt from the reporting requirements of this section, except that the policies and procedures for transfers of assets are those used by the medical assistance program under section 256B.0595. Participants who receive child care assistance under chapter 119B are exempt from the requirements of this section.

[See Note.]

Subd. 2. **Verification of information.** An agency must only require verification of information necessary to determine eligibility and the amount of the assistance payment. If necessary, the agency shall assist the applicant or participant in obtaining verifications and required documents when the applicant or participant is unable to do so.

Subd. 3. **Documentation.** The applicant or participant must document the information required under subdivisions 4 to 7 or authorize the agency to verify the information. The applicant or participant has the burden of providing documentary evidence to verify eligibility. The agency must accept a signed personal statement from the applicant or participant when determining personal property values under section 256P.02. The signed personal statement must include general penalty warnings and a disclaimer that any false or misrepresented information is subject to prosecution for fraud under sections 609.52 and 609.821 and perjury under section 609.48.

Subd. 4. **Factors to be verified.** (a) The agency shall verify the following at application:

- (1) identity of adults;
- (2) age, if necessary to determine eligibility;
- (3) immigration status;
- (4) income;
- (5) spousal support and child support payments made to persons outside the household;
- (6) vehicles;
- (7) checking and savings accounts;
- (8) inconsistent information, if related to eligibility;
- (9) residence;
- (10) Social Security number; and

(11) use of nonrecurring income under section 256P.06, subdivision 3, clause (2), item (ix), for the intended purpose for which it was given and received.

(b) Applicants who are qualified noncitizens and victims of domestic violence as defined under section 256J.08, subdivision 73, clause (7), are not required to verify the information in paragraph (a), clause (10). When a Social Security number is not provided to the agency for verification, this requirement is satisfied when each member of the assistance unit cooperates with the procedures for verification of Social Security numbers, issuance of duplicate cards, and issuance of new numbers which have been established jointly between the Social Security Administration and the commissioner.

[See Note.]

Subd. 5. **MFIP-only verifications.** In addition to subdivision 4, the agency shall verify the following for programs under chapter 256J:

- (1) the presence of the minor child in the home, if questionable;
- (2) the relationship of a minor child to caregivers in the assistance unit;
- (3) pregnancy, if related to eligibility;
- (4) school attendance, if related to eligibility;
- (5) a claim of family violence, if used as a basis to qualify for the family violence waiver under chapter 256J; and
- (6) disability, if used as the basis for reducing the hourly participation requirements under section 256J.55, subdivision 1, or for the type of activity included in an employment plan under section 256J.521, subdivision 2.

Subd. 6. **Personal property inconsistent information.** If there is inconsistent information known to the agency when reporting personal property under section 256P.02, an agency must require the applicant or participant to document the information required under section 256P.02 or authorize the county agency to verify the information. The applicant or participant has the burden of providing documentary evidence to verify eligibility. The agency shall assist the applicant or participant in obtaining required documents when the applicant or participant is unable to do so.

Subd. 7. **Documenting and verifying inconsistent information.** When the agency verifies inconsistent information under subdivision 4, paragraph (a), clause (8); subdivision 6; or subdivision 8, clause (3), the reason for verifying the information must be documented in the financial case record.

Subd. 8. **Recertification.** The agency shall recertify eligibility in an annual interview with the participant. The interview may be conducted by telephone, by Internet telepresence, or face-to-face in the county office or in another location mutually agreed upon. A participant must be given the option of a telephone interview or Internet telepresence to recertify eligibility. During the interview, the agency shall verify the following:

- (1) income, unless excluded, including self-employment earnings;
- (2) assets when the value is within \$200 of the asset limit; and

(3) inconsistent information, if related to eligibility.

Subd. 9. **MFIP-only recertification.** In addition to subdivision 8, the agency shall verify the following for programs under chapter 256J:

(1) the presence of the minor child in the home, if questionable; and

(2) whether a single-caregiver household meets the requirements in section 256J.575, subdivision 3.

Subd. 10. **Participant's completion of form for recertification of eligibility.** A participant must complete forms prescribed by the commissioner which are required for recertification of eligibility according to subdivisions 8 and 9. An agency must end benefits when the participant fails to submit the recertification form and verifications before the end of the certification period. If the participant submits the recertification form within 30 days of the termination of benefits, benefits must be reinstated and made available retroactively for the full benefit month.

Subd. 11. **Participant's completion of household report form.** (a) When a participant is required to complete a household report form, the following paragraphs apply.

(b) If the agency receives an incomplete household report form, the agency must immediately return the incomplete form and clearly state what the participant must do for the form to be complete.

(c) The automated eligibility system must send a notice of proposed termination of assistance to the participant if a complete household report form is not received by the agency. The automated notice must be mailed to the participant by approximately the 16th of the month. When a participant submits an incomplete form on or after the date a notice of proposed termination has been sent, the termination is valid unless the participant submits a complete form before the end of the month.

(d) The submission of a household report form is considered to have continued the participant's application for assistance if a complete household report form is received within a calendar month after the month in which the form was due. Assistance shall be paid for the period beginning with the first day of that calendar month.

(e) An agency must allow good cause exemptions for a participant required to complete a household report form when any of the following factors cause a participant to fail to submit a completed household report form before the end of the month in which the form is due:

(1) an employer delays completion of employment verification;

(2) the agency does not help a participant complete the household report form when the participant asks for help;

(3) a participant does not receive a household report form due to a mistake on the part of the department or the agency or a reported change in address;

(4) a participant is ill or physically or mentally incapacitated; or

(5) some other circumstance occurs that a participant could not avoid with reasonable care which prevents the participant from providing a completed household report form before the end of the month in which the form is due.

Subd. 12. **Contacting third parties.** An agency must not request information about an applicant or participant that is not of public record from a source other than agencies, the department, or the United States Department of Health and Human Services without the applicant's or participant's prior written consent. An applicant's signature on an application form constitutes consent for contact with the sources specified on the application. An agency may use a single consent form to contact a group of similar sources, such as banks or insurance agencies, but the sources to be contacted must be identified by the agency prior to requesting an applicant's consent.

Subd. 13. **Notice to undocumented persons; release of private data.** Agencies, in consultation with the commissioner of human services, shall provide notification to undocumented persons regarding the release of personal data to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services and develop protocols regarding the release or sharing of data about undocumented persons with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services as required under sections 404, 411A, and 434 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

Subd. 14. **Requirement to report to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.** The commissioner shall comply with the reporting requirements under United States Code, title 42, section 611a, and any federal regulation or guidance adopted under that law.

Subd. 15. **Personal statement.** The agency may accept a signed personal statement from the applicant or participant explaining the reasons that the documentation requested in subdivision 3 is unavailable as sufficient documentation at the time of application, recertification, or change related to eligibility only for the following factors:

(1) a claim of family violence, if used as a basis to qualify for the family violence waiver;

(2) relationship of a minor child to caregivers in the assistance unit;

(3) citizenship status from a noncitizen who reports to be, or is identified as, a victim of severe forms of trafficking in persons, if the noncitizen reports that the noncitizen's immigration documents are being held by an individual or group of individuals against the noncitizen's will. The noncitizen must follow up with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to pursue certification. If verification that certification is being pursued is not received within 30 days, the case must be closed and the agency shall pursue overpayments. The ORR documents certifying the noncitizen's status as a victim of severe forms of trafficking in persons, or the reason for the delay in processing, must be received within 90 days, or the case must be closed and the agency shall pursue overpayments; and

(4) other documentation unavailable for reasons beyond the control of the applicant or participant. The applicant or participant must have made reasonable attempts to obtain the documents requested under subdivision 3.

Subd. 16. **Excluded resources.** Payments of funds made according to litigation and subsequent appropriation by the United States Congress to compensate members of Indian tribes for the taking of tribal lands by the federal government are excluded.

History: 2014 c 312 art 28 s 35; 2015 c 71 art 5 s 28,29,35

NOTE: The amendments to subdivisions 1 and 4 by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, sections 28 and 29, are effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.05 SELF-EMPLOYMENT EARNINGS.

Subdivision 1. **Exempted programs.** Participants who qualify for child care assistance programs under chapter 119B, Minnesota supplemental aid under chapter 256D, and group residential housing under chapter 256I on the basis of eligibility for Supplemental Security Income are exempt from this section.

[See Note.]

Subd. 2. **Self-employment income determinations.** An agency must determine self-employment income, which is either:

(1) one-half of gross earnings from self-employment; or

(2) taxable income as determined from an Internal Revenue Service tax form that has been filed with the Internal Revenue Service within the last year. A 12-month average using net taxable income shall be used to budget monthly income.

Subd. 3. **Self-employment budgeting.** (a) The self-employment budget period begins in the month of application or in the first month of self-employment. Applicants and participants must choose one of the methods described in subdivision 2 for determining self-employment earned income.

(b) Applicants and participants who elect to use taxable income as described in subdivision 2, clause (2), to determine self-employment income must continue to use this method until recertification, unless there is an unforeseen significant change in gross income equaling a decline in gross income of the amount equal to or greater than the earned income disregard as defined in section 256P.03 from the income used to determine the benefit for the current month.

(c) For applicants and participants who elect to use one-half of gross earnings as described in subdivision 2, clause (1), to determine self-employment income, earnings must be counted as income in the month received.

History: 2014 c 312 art 28 s 36; 2015 c 71 art 5 s 30,35

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 1 by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 30, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.06 INCOME CALCULATIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Reporting of income.** To determine eligibility, the county agency must evaluate income received by members of the assistance unit, or by other persons whose income is considered available to the assistance unit, and only count income that is available to the assistance unit. Income is available if the individual has legal access to the income.

Subd. 2. **Exempted individuals.** The following members of an assistance unit under chapters 119B and 256J are exempt from having their earned income count towards the income of an assistance unit:

(1) children under six years old;

(2) caregivers under 20 years of age enrolled at least half-time in school; and

(3) minors enrolled in school full time.

Subd. 3. **Income inclusions.** The following must be included in determining the income of an assistance unit:

- (1) earned income; and
- (2) unearned income, which includes:
 - (i) interest and dividends from investments and savings;
 - (ii) capital gains as defined by the Internal Revenue Service from any sale of real property;
 - (iii) proceeds from rent and contract for deed payments in excess of the principal and interest portion owed on property;
 - (iv) income from trusts, excluding special needs and supplemental needs trusts;
 - (v) interest income from loans made by the participant or household;
 - (vi) cash prizes and winnings;
 - (vii) unemployment insurance income;
 - (viii) retirement, survivors, and disability insurance payments;
 - (ix) nonrecurring income over \$60 per quarter unless earmarked and used for the purpose for which it is intended. Income and use of this income is subject to verification requirements under section 256P.04;
 - (x) retirement benefits;
 - (xi) cash assistance benefits, as defined by each program in chapters 119B, 256D, 256I, and 256J;
 - (xii) tribal per capita payments unless excluded by federal and state law;
 - (xiii) income and payments from service and rehabilitation programs that meet or exceed the state's minimum wage rate;
 - (xiv) income from members of the United States armed forces unless excluded from income taxes according to federal or state law;
 - (xv) all child support payments for programs under chapters 119B, 256D, and 256I;
 - (xvi) the amount of current child support received that exceeds \$100 for assistance units with one child and \$200 for assistance units with two or more children for programs under chapter 256J; and
 - (xvii) spousal support.

History: 2015 c 71 art 5 s 31,35

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 31, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.07 REPORTING OF INCOME AND CHANGES.

Subdivision 1. **Exempted programs.** Participants who qualify for Minnesota supplemental aid under chapter 256D and for group residential housing under chapter 256I on the basis of eligibility for Supplemental Security Income are exempt from this section.

Subd. 2. **Reporting requirements.** An applicant or participant must provide information on an application and any subsequent reporting forms about the assistance unit's circumstances that affect eligibility or benefits. An applicant or assistance unit must report changes identified in subdivision 3. When information is not accurately reported, both an overpayment and a referral for a fraud investigation may result. When information or documentation is not provided, the receipt of any benefit may be delayed or denied, depending on the type of information required and its effect on eligibility.

Subd. 3. **Changes that must be reported.** An assistance unit must report the changes or anticipated changes specified in clauses (1) to (12) within ten days of the date they occur, at the time of recertification of eligibility under section 256P.04, subdivisions 8 and 9, or within eight calendar days of a reporting period, whichever occurs first. An assistance unit must report other changes at the time of recertification of eligibility under section 256P.04, subdivisions 8 and 9, or at the end of a reporting period, as applicable. When an agency could have reduced or terminated assistance for one or more payment months if a delay in reporting a change specified under clauses (1) to (12) had not occurred, the agency must determine whether a timely notice could have been issued on the day that the change occurred. When a timely notice could have been issued, each month's overpayment subsequent to that notice must be considered a client error overpayment under section 119B.11, subdivision 2a, or 256P.08. Changes in circumstances that must be reported within ten days must also be reported for the reporting period in which those changes occurred. Within ten days, an assistance unit must report:

- (1) a change in earned income of \$100 per month or greater;
- (2) a change in unearned income of \$50 per month or greater;
- (3) a change in employment status and hours;
- (4) a change in address or residence;
- (5) a change in household composition with the exception of programs under chapter 256I;
- (6) a receipt of a lump-sum payment;
- (7) an increase in assets if over \$9,000 with the exception of programs under chapter 119B;
- (8) a change in citizenship or immigration status;
- (9) a change in family status with the exception of programs under chapter 256I;
- (10) a change in disability status of a unit member, with the exception of programs under chapter 119B;
- (11) a new rent subsidy or a change in rent subsidy; and
- (12) a sale, purchase, or transfer of real property.

Subd. 4. **MFIP-specific reporting.** In addition to subdivision 3, an assistance unit under chapter 256J, within ten days of the change, must report:

- (1) a pregnancy not resulting in birth when there are no other minor children; and
- (2) a change in school attendance of a parent under 20 years of age or of an employed child.

Subd. 5. **DWP-specific reporting.** In addition to subdivisions 3 and 4, an assistance unit participating in the diversionary work program under section 256J.95 must report on an application:

- (1) shelter expenses; and
- (2) utility expenses.

Subd. 6. **Child care assistance programs-specific reporting.** In addition to subdivision 3, an assistance unit under chapter 119B, within ten days of the change, must report:

- (1) a change in a parentally responsible individual's visitation schedule or custody arrangement for any child receiving child care assistance program benefits; and
- (2) a change in authorized activity status.

Subd. 7. **Minnesota supplemental aid-specific reporting.** In addition to subdivision 3, an assistance unit participating in the Minnesota supplemental aid program under section 256D.44, subdivision 5, paragraph (f), within ten days of the change, must report shelter expenses.

History: 2015 c 71 art 5 s 32,35

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 32, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.

256P.08 CORRECTION OF OVERPAYMENTS AND UNDERPAYMENTS.

Subdivision 1. **Exempted programs.** Participants who qualify for child care assistance programs under chapter 119B or group residential housing under chapter 256I are exempt from this section.

Subd. 2. **Scope of overpayment.** (a) When a participant or former participant receives an overpayment due to client or ATM error, or due to assistance received while an appeal is pending and the participant or former participant is determined ineligible for assistance or for less assistance than was received, except as provided for interim assistance in section 256D.06, subdivision 5, the county agency must recoup or recover the overpayment using the following methods:

- (1) reconstruct each affected budget month and corresponding payment month;
- (2) use the policies and procedures that were in effect for the payment month; and
- (3) do not allow employment disregards in the calculation of the overpayment when the unit has not reported within two calendar months following the end of the month in which the income was received.

(b) Establishment of an overpayment is limited to six years prior to the month of discovery due to client error or an intentional program violation determined under section 256.046.

(c) A participant or former participant is not responsible for overpayments due to agency error, unless the amount of the overpayment is large enough that a reasonable person would know it is an error.

Subd. 3. **Notice of overpayment.** When a county agency discovers that a participant or former participant has received an overpayment for one or more months, the county agency must notify the participant or former participant of the overpayment in writing. A notice of overpayment must specify the reason for the

overpayment, the authority for citing the overpayment, the time period in which the overpayment occurred, the amount of the overpayment, and the participant's or former participant's right to appeal. No limit applies to the period in which the county agency is required to recoup or recover an overpayment according to subdivisions 4, 5, and 6.

Subd. 4. Recovering general assistance and Minnesota supplemental aid overpayments. (a) If an amount of assistance is paid to an assistance unit in excess of the payment due, it shall be recoverable by the agency. The agency shall give written notice to the participant of its intention to recover the overpayment.

(b) If the individual is no longer receiving assistance, the agency may request voluntary repayment or pursue civil recovery.

(c) If the individual is receiving assistance, except as provided for interim assistance in section 256D.06, subdivision 5, when an overpayment occurs the agency shall recover the overpayment by withholding an amount equal to:

(1) three percent of the assistance unit's standard of need for all Minnesota supplemental aid assistance units, and nonfraud cases for general assistance; and

(2) ten percent where fraud has occurred in general assistance cases; or

(3) the amount of the monthly general assistance or Minnesota supplemental aid payment, whichever is less.

(d) In cases when there is both an overpayment and underpayment, the county agency shall offset one against the other in correcting the payment.

(e) Overpayments may also be voluntarily repaid, in part or in full, by the individual, in addition to the assistance reductions provided in this subdivision, to include further voluntary reductions in the grant level agreed to in writing by the individual, until the total amount of the overpayment is repaid.

(f) The county agency shall make reasonable efforts to recover overpayments to individuals no longer on assistance. The agency need not attempt to recover overpayments of less than \$35 paid to an individual no longer on assistance if the individual does not receive assistance again within three years, unless the individual has been convicted of violating section 256.98.

(g) Establishment of an overpayment is limited to 12 months prior to the month of discovery due to agency error and six years prior to the month of discovery due to client error or an intentional program violation determined under section 256.046.

(h) Residents of licensed residential facilities shall not have overpayments recovered from their personal needs allowance.

(i) Overpayments by another maintenance benefit program shall not be recovered from the general assistance or Minnesota supplemental aid grant.

Subd. 5. Recovering MFIP overpayments. A county agency must initiate efforts to recover overpayments paid to a former participant or caregiver. Caregivers, both parental and nonparental, and minor caregivers of an assistance unit at the time an overpayment occurs, whether receiving assistance or not, are jointly and individually liable for repayment of the overpayment. The county agency must request repayment

from the former participants and caregivers. When an agreement for repayment is not completed within six months of the date of discovery or when there is a default on an agreement for repayment after six months, the county agency must initiate recovery consistent with chapter 270A or section 541.05. When a person has been disqualified or convicted of fraud under section 256.98, recovery must be sought regardless of the amount of overpayment. When an overpayment is less than \$35, and is not the result of a fraud conviction under section 256.98, the county agency must not seek recovery under this subdivision. The county agency must retain information about all overpayments regardless of the amount. When an adult, adult caregiver, or minor caregiver reapplies for assistance, the overpayment must be recouped under subdivision 6.

Subd. 6. Recouping overpayments from MFIP participants. A participant may voluntarily repay, in part or in full, an overpayment even if assistance is reduced under this subdivision, until the total amount of the overpayment is repaid. When an overpayment occurs due to fraud, the county agency must recover from the overpaid assistance unit, including child-only cases, ten percent of the applicable standard or the amount of the monthly assistance payment, whichever is less. When a nonfraud overpayment occurs, the county agency must recover from the overpaid assistance unit, including child-only cases, three percent of the MFIP standard of need or the amount of the monthly assistance payment, whichever is less.

Subd. 7. Recovering automatic teller machine errors. For recipients receiving benefits by electronic benefit transfer, if the overpayment is a result of an ATM dispensing funds in error to the recipient, the agency may recover the ATM error by immediately withdrawing funds from the recipient's electronic benefit transfer account, up to the amount of the error.

Subd. 8. Scope of underpayments. A county agency must issue a corrective payment for underpayments made to a participant or to a person who would be a participant if an agency or client error causing the underpayment had not occurred. Corrective payments are limited to 12 months prior to the month of discovery. The county agency must issue the corrective payment according to subdivision 10.

Subd. 9. Identifying the underpayment. An underpayment may be identified by a county agency, participant, former participant, or person who would be a participant except for agency or client error.

Subd. 10. Issuing corrective payments. A county agency must correct an underpayment within seven calendar days after the underpayment has been identified, by adding the corrective payment amount to the monthly assistance payment of the participant, issuing a separate payment to a participant or former participant, or reducing an existing overpayment balance. When an underpayment occurs in a payment month and is not identified until the next payment month or later, the county agency must first subtract the underpayment from any overpayment balance before issuing the corrective payment. The county agency must not apply an underpayment in a current payment month against an overpayment balance. When an underpayment in the current payment month is identified, the corrective payment must be issued within seven calendar days after the underpayment is identified. Corrective payments must be excluded when determining the applicant's or participant's income and resources for the month of payment. The county agency must correct underpayments using the following methods:

- (1) reconstruct each affected budget month and corresponding payment month; and
- (2) use the policies and procedures that were in effect for the payment month.

Subd. 11. Appeals. A participant may appeal an underpayment, an overpayment, and a reduction in an assistance payment made to recoup the overpayment under subdivisions 4 and 6. The participant's appeal of each issue must be timely under section 256.045. When an appeal based on the notice issued under

subdivision 3 is not timely, the fact or the amount of that overpayment must not be considered as a part of a later appeal, including an appeal of a reduction in an assistance payment to recoup that overpayment.

History: *2015 c 71 art 5 s 33,35*

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 33, is effective August 1, 2016. Laws 2015, chapter 71, article 5, section 35.