

Washington County Performance Improvement Plan MFIP Work Participation Rate

Counties and Tribes that did not have a Work Participation Rate of 50% or improve by 5% from the previous year must submit a Performance Improvement Plan to qualify for additional performance funds. The Performance Improvement Plan identifies issues and barriers to performance and plans and strategies to improve on this measure over the next biennium.

If current county strategies are not adequate in moving families to employment, counties should explore new ideas including consulting with counties that are performing well on the Work Participation Rate. Some strategies that have been effective include designating a Work Participation Rate Coordinator, structured job search, improved record keeping on MAXIS and Work Force One (WF1), review and reduce the number of unaccounted cases, unpaid work experience, subsidized employment, on the job training and designating a job developer to increase employment opportunities.

Complete the following questions and send this document as an email attachment when submitting your county's biennial service agreement. For questions or inquiries on the Performance Improvement Plan, contact Mayjoua Ly at (651) 431-4030. Approval of the Performance Improvement Plan will follow the same timeline as the service agreements. Quarterly update reports on your county's progress to improve this measure is required by the department. The department will provide further information when guidelines are developed.

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Date completed:	9/3/2007

1. Provide a description of overarching factors and systemic issues that impede your county from achieving a Work Participation Rate of 50 percent or more, or a five percentage points improvement from the previous year.

There are several overarching factors and systemic issues that have impeded Washington County from achieving the Work Participation Rate of 50 percent or 5 percentage points improvement including:

- Lack of a consistent strategy and standards among all of the employment counselors for holding the MFIP participants accountable.
- The inclusion of participants with disabilities in the participation rate that were previously excluded.
- Lack of literacy attainment for a high percentage (45%) of participants.
- Some counselors lack the understanding of the intricacies of the Work Participation Rates and being efficient with inputting data into the Workforce One system.
- Inadequate use of our unpaid Community Work Experience Services.
- Racial disparities and under utilization of the existing tools for monitoring participation rates.

2. How will you address these factors/issues?

The MFIP counselors and supervisor will review current strategies and work to enhance those that work and develop new ones to replace the ineffective ones.

- A Participation Rate Team will be developed utilizing counselors that have applied understanding of the participation rate and are high performers.
- The participation team will review cases and work with each counselor monthly to assure that participation hours are entered correctly and timely. Assist counselors that are struggling with new strategies to improve performance. Supervisor will require counselors to be more responsive to participant’s needs and hold them accountable. Counselors will make weekly contacts with participants. Re-educate counselors on the rules and the need to be efficient and respond to participants non-compliance issues promptly. Learn to utilize all MFIP reports to verify and monitor participant’s performance.

We’ve designated two counselors to work on disability cases with their focus to work on utilizing Mental Health and Disability Services to best meet customer’s needs in work activities or in the SSI system. We will continue to provide special assistance to these cases even when they are not counted towards of the participation rate.

We have multiple resources that counselors can access to improve participation activities. Bank skills training classes will be offered to help improve their financial literacy and job possibilities in a financial institution. Education services will continue to be offered through our ABE/GED system throughout the County and also, post secondary for short term training at Century College and other private and non-profit training institutions as needed.

Our Empowerment classes will continue to help build self-esteem and increase positive self awareness. We are implementing a monthly “Express Yourself” public speaking workshop. This will help many of our participants to articulate their skills and abilities with confidence.

Our department and county are offering a variety of diversity trainings which will help improve cultural sensitivity of staff. We are already seeing the impact in participants and staff relationships. We will continue to offer supported work opportunities through our partnerships with East Suburban Resources. Supported work has already brought very positive success and will be expanded. We will continue to offer unpaid Community Work Experience through Community Volunteer Services. This service is a priority service for improving our participation rate but is has not been utilized to its fullest potential.

We’ve dedicated a full-time trainer to facilitate weekly job search activities. Weekly job clubs and other coordinated workshop activities are available to all of our MFIP and DWP participants.

3. For each strategy your county will implement, identify the specific populations you will target, action steps you will take, anticipated outcomes and targets, methods and persons responsible for implementation and monitoring performance. Complete one table for each strategy proposed. (One response box is provided below for the first strategy. Copy, paste and complete a response box for each additional strategy and add rows for each additional action step.)

Instructions for completing this question:

Strategy – list an approach that you intend to use to improve your Work Participation Rate. For example, unpaid work experience.

Anticipated outcome of strategy – what do you hope to achieve for the identified strategy. For example, 50% of MFIP participants in job search activities will be placed in unpaid work experience after their six weeks of job search.

Person(s) responsible for implementing action steps and monitoring progress – provide the name, title and contact information for the person(s) responsible for implementing and monitoring each action step.

Targets – indicate the county’s current annualized WPR performance for the period Apr. 2006 to Mar. 2007 provided by the department. State anticipated annualized targets your county plans to achieve for the periods Apr. 2007 to Mar. 2008 and Apr. 2008 to Mar. 2009.

Action Step for implementing strategy – action steps are activities or tasks that provide step-by-step directions on how to accomplish an overall goal.

Date to be completed – record the expected completion date for each action step.

Method of Measurement/Monitoring – explain how you will measure program improvement strategy(s) based on the information included in the table.

1.

Strategy: Employment Counselors responding to individual customers cases in a timely manner.		
Population: General MFIP		
Anticipated outcomes: Customers that are not producing required hours and do not have good cause will promptly receive an NOITS and the case will be sanctioned.		
Person(s) responsible: Employment Counselors		
Targets:	Current annualized WPR performance (Apr. 06 - Mar. 07):	41 %
	Anticipated targets you plan to achieve by the end of:	Apr. 07 – Mar. 08 45 %
		Apr. 08 – Mar. 09 50 %
List Action Steps below for implementing strategy	Date to be completed	Methods of Measuring/Monitoring Progress
Re-education of Employment Counselors of the need to work in present time and responding to customers non-compliance issues promptly.	3/31/2008	Random Case Reviews and case consultation with supervisors
Employment Counselors requiring and maintaining weekly contact	3/31/2008	Random case reviews for weekly timesheets and case consultation with supervisor

2.

Strategy: Re-adjusting Work Participation Hours Entry Method and Timelines			
Population: General MFIP			
Anticipated outcomes: Employment Counselors will be able to utilize the Preliminary Hours Report as a useful tool in verifying needed hours to meet the participation rate and working in the present time and not having to try to figure out what took place two months ago.			
Person(s) responsible: Employment Counselors			
Targets:	Current annualized WPR performance (Apr. 06 - Mar. 07):		41 %
	Anticipated targets you plan to achieve by the end of:	Apr. 07 – Mar. 08	45 %
		Apr. 08 – Mar. 09	50 %
List Action Steps below for implementing strategy			
Counselors will enter Work Participation Hours into Workforce One System by the end of the month for the previous month. Additionally,		3/31/2008	Monitoring of Work Participation Hours entry time, consultation with supervisor and reviewing MFIP preliminary monthly reports.
Counselors will utilize all MFIP reports in verifying and monitoring their MFIP customers performance		3/31/2008	Observation and consultation of Employment Counselors utilizing the MFIP reports.

3.

Strategy: Participation Rate Team will review and work with each Employment Counselor monthly.			
Population: General MFIP			
Anticipated outcomes: Customers participation hours are entered correctly and new strategies are provided for counselors in meeting the participation rate			
Person(s) responsible: Employment Counselors & Participation Rate Team			
Targets:	Current annualized WPR performance (Apr. 06 - Mar. 07):		41 %
	Anticipated targets you plan to achieve by the end of:	Apr. 07 – Mar. 08	45 %
		Apr. 08 – Mar. 09	50 %
List Action Steps below for implementing strategy			
Monthly meetings with Employment Counselor and Participation Rate Team		3/31/2009	Monthly reviews of Work Participation

4. How will potential performance funds be used to achieve stated strategies?

In the response box below, enter the amount of the performance funds you will receive for 2008 if your PIP is approved by the department. Briefly state the strategies from Question 3 above and budget the amount to be used for each strategy. Total for all strategies should equal the total amount your county will receive. (Lines for two strategies are provided below. Copy and paste for additional strategies)

Amount of potential performance funds (provided in the WPR table):	\$ 47,394
Strategy 1: Employment Counselors Responding to Customer Cases in Timely Manner	\$ 20,000
Strategy 2: Re-adjusting Work Participation Hours Entry Method and Timeline	\$ 10,000
Strategy 3: Participation Rate Team Review and Assistance	\$ 17,394