

SKILLS2WORK

THIRD-PARTY REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

INFORMATION FOR PROVIDERS OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SERVICES

WHAT?

Skills2Work is part of the federal Employment and Training (E&T) program associated with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly called Food Stamps. Basically, the federal government provides some funding to support programs administered by States to help SNAP recipients prepare for in-demand jobs and become employed. One way this is done is through the Third-Party Reimbursement Program, where service providers can partner with the State Agency (MDHS) to provide employment and training services to SNAP recipients and be reimbursed for 50% of their total eligible program expenditures incurred by providing the services.

WHO?

Any provider, public or non-profit, offering approved career/technical or workforce skills training programs and wraparound services to SNAP recipients using non-federal funding may be eligible to partner with MDHS in this initiative. Approved services include job search training, job search, work experience, education, vocational training, and job retention. Providers must also offer the following activities as part of their program: an individualized assessment, employment plan, case management, and supportive services. Providers are encouraged to work with external worthwhile resources to maximize the benefit to participants.

SNAP recipients ages 18-59 who are determined eligible and not receiving TANF benefits may volunteer to participate in the Skills2Work program.

HOW?

First, you must complete a Skills2Work Provider Assessment about your organization and then become an approved provider through MDHS. The process is relatively simple. The provider must sign an agreement with MDHS which outlines the services the provider will offer and an estimate of the budget for the program. Once you are an approved provider, you simply provide the services, submit a monthly invoice to MDHS for the allowable costs and MDHS will access the federal funds, retain a percentage, and pass the remainder back to the provider. The provider may then invest those non-federal funds back into the program and request reimbursement again each month that services are provided.

WHY?

Although this funding has always been available, MDHS has not accessed it before now. MDHS now wants to utilize this opportunity to help more SNAP recipients have the opportunity to become employed and/or advance to the next level.

The real question for providers is, **"Why not?"** You are already providing the services (probably to SNAP recipients, whether you know it or not) and doing good work to help people find a job. Why not get back 50% of your total eligible program expenditures?

STEPS TO BECOMING A THIRD-PARTY REIMBURSEMENT PARTNER

- Become familiar with SNAP Employment and Training Program requirements by reviewing the SNAP E&T Toolkit which is located on the FNS website at www.fns.usda.gov/ET-policy-guidance or http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf.
- Determine if the services provided by your agency are allowable Employment and Training activities.
- Determine if your agency has a source of non-Federal funding to cover 100% of the costs associated with the Employment and Training Program activities your agency proposes to offer. Determine if you are able to financially sustain your program while waiting for reimbursement.
- Evaluate if your agency is currently serving or is able to recruit SNAP participants for the Employment and Training Program.
- Evaluate your agency's ability to accurately track and allocate costs associated with the Employment and Training program and maintain acceptable documentation of all costs subject to reimbursement.
- Contact the MS Department of Human Services (MDHS), Division of Workforce Development, to request additional guidance if needed to evaluate the feasibility of your agency becoming a partner in the Third Party Reimbursement Program.
- Draft a "Scope of Services", a budget estimate, and a budget narrative.
- Based on the availability of federal funds and the appropriateness of the services proposed by your agency, MDHS will provide notification regarding the approval of the request to participate in the Skills2Work program. If approval is granted, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Grant Agreement will be executed between your agency and MDHS. Prior to program implementation, MDHS will schedule and conduct an onsite visit to provide more detailed information on the implementation and operation of the program.

MDHS

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