



05/03/2024

## **RESPONSE TO INTERIM COMMITTEE REQUESTS**

**FOR: Children, Families, Health and Human Services Interim Committee**

**SUBJECT: REQUESTED INFORMATION DURING 3/12/24 MEETING**

Sen. Lenz

1. Can the Department supply an exact number of previous locations prior to bringing on Maximus?

Sen. Emrich

2. How does Maximus's services differ from the current spread of support? Is there current in-person support closer that will be terminated? How many locations does the Department have statewide currently? Can the Department also provide a map of current locations?
3. Regarding the RSS Program, could the Department lay out some details about the program including its history?
  - a. What type of verification is done to determine if the clients have legal refugee status?
  - b. Are there work requirements for the RSS program?

Sen. Gross

4. Subcontractors – The Director offered to follow up with the Senator personally if she still had questions regarding subcontractors.

Rep. Carlson

5. Could the Department provide clarification on the cost per client per month? It seems like it would be more than the \$332 per client per month that is allotted.
6. There is a cap copay of 9% in the Federal Rules, yet Montana has a cap copay of 8%. Could the Department double check this to confirm if this is the case?

**RESPONSE:**

Sen. Lenz

1. Can the Department supply an exact number of previous locations prior to bringing on Maximus?

Prior to bringing on Maximus, there were 10 counties providing SNAP Employment and Training through 7 providers. There were 12 providers providing TANF Employment and Training services across 19 regions that covered the state. It is important to note that TANF requires services to be delivered to all Montanans who are eligible, while SNAP Employment and Training does not have a statewide requirement. The Department is not able to provide information on what physical locations providers have used to provide services prior to bringing on Maximus.

Sen. Emrich

2. How do Maximus's services differ from the current spread of support? Is there current in-person support closer that will be terminated? How many locations do we have statewide currently? Can the Department also provide a map of current locations?

The Department is not able to provide information on what physical locations providers have used to provide services prior to bringing on Maximus. Maximus has a statewide coverage plan that includes a total of 21 locations or service centers. All locations will offer services through a mix of in-person, virtual and digital platforms to meet client needs and preferences.

The urban service centers will be in Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula.

The other service centers will be in Browning, Butte, Cut Bank, Glasgow, Glendive, Hamilton, Hardin, Havre, Lame Deer, Lewistown, Libby, Kalispell, Miles City, Polson, Sidney, and Wolf Point.

The days and hours of operation for the non-urban service locations will be determined by caseload size and client needs.

3. Regarding the RSS program, could the Department lay out some details about the program including its history?

The Refugee Act of 1980 created the Federal Refugee Resettlement Program and Refugee Support Services (RSS) was originally a part of the Act. Federally, the

Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) program oversees RSS. ORR is within the Administration for Families and Children (ACF), which is within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

3a. What type of verification is done to determine if the clients have legal refugee status?

State Refugee Resettlement program staff review all immigration documents to determine if an individual is eligible for any refugee services, including RSS. These documents may include passports with a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) stamp, travel authorization documents, I-94s (DHS Arrival/Departure Record), Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) or any other immigration paperwork the individual may have. We also have access to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Electronic Disease Notification (EDN) system which verifies status, date of entry, family composition as well as any health data collected at an overseas medical screening.

3b. Are there work requirements for the RSS program?

Yes as RSS is a non-cash Employment and Training program. Services focus on employability assessment, training and job development, vocational training and skills recertification, job placement, and job maintenance.

RSS also addresses employment challenges such as social adjustment issues, lack of knowledge of the English language and the need for interpretation and translation services, daycare for children, and citizenship and naturalization issues.

ORR requires refugees to become employed as soon as possible after they arrive, and refugees must accept employment offers, even if not in their preferred industry.

Employment is very important as refugees are required to start repaying their International Organization for Migration (IOM) loan within six months of arrival in the U.S. The IOM loan is the total amount it costs for the refugee and their family to travel to the U.S.

The most common Montana industries that employ refugees are:

- Manufacturing
- Restaurant/Food Services
- Retail
- Carpentry
- Housekeeping

- Childcare
- Mechanics

Average starting pay for FFY23 was \$15.80/hour.

Sen. Gross

4. Subcontractors - The Director offered to follow up with the Senator personally if she still had questions regarding subcontractors.

Rep. Carlson

5. Could the Department provide clarification on the cost per client per month? It seems like it would be more than the \$332 per client per month that is allotted.

\$332 is the average SNAP benefit per family and not the cost per client. Cost per client is dependent on the number of clients served and will not be available until Maximus has assessed current caseloads and started serving clients.

6. There is a cap copay of 9% in the Federal Rules, yet Montana has a cap copay of 8%. Could the Department double check this to confirm if this is the case?

HB 648 Section 3 states: "Copayment requirements. Each eligible family shall participate in the cost of childcare by making a copayment based on a sliding fee scale not to exceed 9% of an eligible family's monthly income."

The new Best Beginnings Payment Policy as of March 1, 2024, caps copayments at 8%.