

Subject Recommendations of the Workgroup on Expediting Rental Assistance

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Overview

This bill includes the policy recommendations of the Workgroup on Expediting Rental Assistance. This workgroup was established in 2023 and tasked with creating a legislative proposal to ensure that administrators of rental assistance could:

“(1) within two weeks of receiving a completed application for rental assistance, make and issue a determination on the application; and

(2) within 30 days of receiving a completed application for rental assistance, issue payment on an approved rental application to the landlord.”

Summary

Section	Description
1	Annual projection of emergency rental assistance needs. Requires the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) to consult with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and administrators of rental assistance to project the amount of money necessary to meet all needs for assistance from family homeless prevention and assistance, emergency assistance, and emergency general assistance.
2	Providing information on rental housing. Requires MHFA to inform landlords and administrators of rental assistance of state and federal programs to stabilize renters’ housing.
3	Data collection to measure timeliness of rental assistance. Requires MHFA to consult with DHS and administrators of rental assistance to develop criteria for measuring how timely applications for assistance from the state’s

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	family homeless prevention and assistance, emergency assistance, and emergency general assistance programs are processed. Requires a report to the legislature by January 15, 2027, to outline the data, including a determination whether the metrics in the legislation establishing the workgroup were met.
4	Direction to commissioner of human services; MAXIS modifications. Requires DHS to modify MAXIS to be more flexible in issuing rental assistance payments.
5	Direction to commissioners of human services and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency; emergency assistance program modifications. Requires DHS and MHFA to develop recommendations to speed up the processing of emergency rental assistance, including adopting administrative policies and proposing legislative changes.
6	Direction to commissioners of human services and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency; expand outreach and consolidate program information. Requires DHS and MHFA to find ways to tell more people about their rental assistance programs and how to apply for them. Requires DHS and MHFA to make and keep up to date a single resource for potential applicants to both agencies' rental assistance programs.
7	E-signature options for rental assistance. Requires DHS and MHFA to develop uniform e-signature options and to require administrators of rental assistance to use those options by June 30, 2026.
8	Language access in applications for rental assistance. Requires MHFA and DHS to make a number of changes to improve language access to their rental assistance programs, including: (1) researching state and federal laws and regulations regarding language access to ensure compliance; (2) identifying which languages program materials should be translated into to improve access to the state's rental assistance programs; (3) translating website applications for the state's rental assistance programs into multiple languages; (4) identifying needs and sources for funding to implement these changes; and (5) providing technical assistance to administrators of rental assistance so they can meet language access standards.
9	Promoting adequate funding for processing emergency assistance applications; direction to commissioner. Requires DHS, in consultation with others, to determine appropriate compensation packages for support staff and processors of rental assistance, to determine if it needs more funds to speed up the processing of emergency rental assistance

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	applications, and to develop a formula to calculate its funding needs. Requires the commissioner of DHS to report on these determinations by January 1, 2026.
10	Recommendations for a centralized rental assistance application system. Requires DHS to consult with MHFA and the information technology services to develop a proposal for a new centralized emergency rental assistance application system for all providers of the state’s emergency rental assistance programs. Requires a report to the legislature on the proposal and its cost estimate by January 15, 2027.
11	Verification procedures for rental assistance. Requires MHFA and DHS to consult with local officials to find ways to make it simpler to verify information in applications for the state’s rental assistance programs. Requires the agencies to develop recommendations by January 1, 2025, to adopt them by July 1, 2025, and to provide technical assistance to administrators of rental assistance implementing the recommendations.



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