

# Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA)

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- *MACSSA is an affiliate of the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and is a professional association of human service administrators that serve Minnesota's 87 counties.*
- Mission: Advocate for meaningful system improvement, influence policy and legislation and promote quality human services that positively impact people, communities, and counties throughout Minnesota.

## Testifiers:

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# The County Role in Human Services

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- In general, Minnesota is a state where programs are state-supervised (Department of Human Services (DHS)) and county-administered.
- Counties implement nearly all human services programs
- In many cases, counties are financial partners with the state to fund human services programs. In all cases, counties use levy dollars to respond to community needs.

# Health Care

## Counties:

- Administer medical assistance in their respective counties
- Process individual healthcare applications
- Verify individual eligibility for state healthcare programs
- In some instances, counties (or a group of counties) manage a health plan (“county-based purchasing”)
- Evaluate and Score Managed Care Procurement RFPs
- Manage nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) (differs county to county)

## Trends:

- As the federal public health emergency is set to expire, the state and counties face acute challenges in processing applications and renewals that were paused during the emergency. Counties will attempt to increase staff and training to respond but are reliant on aging technology and challenging timelines for meeting needs in an urgent way.

# Aging and Disabilities Services

## Counties:

- Assess individuals with disabilities for waived services, often do the case management for the waivers, and oversee allotted budgets (differ county to county)
- Screen, assess, and provide case management for individuals in need of adult protection. Screen for, complete, and sometimes fund a conservatorship/guardianship

## Trends:

- We are seeing unprecedented stresses on our adult protection system as our population ages.
- Technology challenges are acute in the disability services area.
- Despite county desire to focus on community transitions and consumer-center choices, providers are struggling (with workforce and funding) and we are losing appropriate settings for individuals.
- We continue to work with DHS and federal government to redesign our case management to better serve individuals, meet federal requirements, and be more efficient.

# Behavioral health and housing

## Counties:

- Are state-designated “mental health authority” responsible for working across sectors to ensure adequate community resources. While we may not directly provide services, we try to assure that there is an integrated system of care.
- Determine financial eligibility for publicly-funded treatment
- Are responsible for adult case management or treatment coordination (mental and chemical health) – this includes finding and coordinating transition to appropriate placements, managing prescreening and process for civil commitments.
- Are responsible for child case management – screening, managing and paying for out-of-home placements
- Pay 22.95% of the cost of substance use disorder treatment for individuals not enrolled in Medical Assistance but do not have role in determining or coordinating administered services

## Trends:

- Workforce challenges in this space will undoubtedly put extreme strain on other areas (child protection, emergency chemical health issues, etc.)
- Systemic investments – from case management through the entire continuum of services – must be made to avoid literal personal, family, and worker tragedies.
- Policy goals around direct access intended to streamline an individual’s access to substance use services have been difficult in some areas due to lack of providers and workforce shortage. At the same time, counties are no longer filling those gaps with SUD Services leaving many with only crisis options for care.
- Integrated solutions with law enforcement are most effective to addressing high-acuity needs within communities.
- Shortages in housing and food exacerbate pervasive, cyclical poverty and further strain children and adult mental health, financial assistance, etc.

# Direct care and treatment

## Counties:

- Are responsible for helping individuals move out of state-run facilities
- Pay some costs for individuals in a state-operated facility who no longer meet medical criteria (varies based on individual)
- Invest levy dollars in building out local placement/service options

## Trends:

- Resources for these most challenging situations are inadequate system-wide.
- Collaboration between DHS and counties focuses on defining the state/county role and system build-out.
- County costs are challenged by lack of appropriate placements, outside of county control.

# Child safety and permanency

## Counties:

- Are responsible for intake, screening, assessment, ongoing case management, and permanency for child safety and permanency.
- Fund out-of-home placements and services.
- Are responsible for kinship placements, parental representation, and coordinating and planning with transition-age youth.
- Focus on ways to improve child safety through prevention and focus on equity:
  - Family First
  - Investment of opioid settlement dollars

# Children and families

## Child support:

Through our human services and county attorney functions, counties conduct all aspects of child support.

## Child care:

- License family child care settings
- License adult and child foster care
- Operate and determine eligibility for CCAP
- Focus on increasing the number of child care homes and providers

## Economic Assistance:

- Counties conduct eligibility, case maintenance, audits, and quality control across cash assistance programs including SNAP, MFIP, General Assistance, emergency SNAP



# Office of Inspector General

## Counties:

- Enter information for background studies – facilitate with licensed providers
  - Foster care, child care
- Work closely with OIG on program integrity
  - Ensure best information and working together to improve, transform processes