



Saint Louis County

Public Health and Human Service Department – www.stlouiscountymn.gov

Linnea Mirsch
PHHS Director

Chair Senator Wiklund
Health and Human Services Committee
507 State Office Building St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for SF 2088 – In-house training pilot

Dear Chair Wiklund and Chief Author Senator Abeler,
CC: Co-Author Senator Grant Hauschild and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

On behalf of St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services, we thank you for including the language introducing the opportunity for counties to pilot the required training within their own county with appropriate approvals.

St. Louis County uses group hiring with cohorts of up to twenty new Financial Workers starting at one time. Under the current structure, these cohorts must take courses in whatever order and speed they happen to be occurring, regardless of difficulty of the program, required pre-work, or comprehension. Sometimes a cohort has to be split up between multiple sessions for a particular program due to seat limitations, creating significant coordination challenges for county training staff. These details – the order programs are trained, the amount of time between the trainings, the attendance of colleagues, have a significant impact on the success of the trainings and ability to move towards productive financial workers. County control of the order, timing and schedule of trainings would allow for new financial workers to move through the many program trainings in the most efficient and effective manner possible. County trainers can be responsive to the needs of each cohort and each employee.

St Louis County is currently approved to provide training for General Assistance, Minnesota Supplemental Assistance, Minnesota Family Investment Program, and Diversionary Work Program. Historically, St Louis County trainers have also conducted mandatory trainings for medical assistance and the METS system. These trainings are high quality and have proven positive outcomes. This success can be expanded to more programs.

Making the training available in a more timely manner within a county setting will improve the efficiency and effectiveness, allowing counties to appropriately train staff to respond to record numbers of public assistance cases and respond to the turnover demands we are currently experiencing.

We applaud the work to include these important provisions in SF 2088 and hope that once this has been proven effective this can be made permanent so counties can continue to train and onboard staff in timely, proven manners. Thank you for your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

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